
A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.18 APRIL 1987
£1
AMTIX!
MONTHLY SOFTWARE REVIEW FOR THE
AMSTRAD COMPUTERS
Experience the arrival of THE
SENTINEL
Firebird's greatest ever?
DRAGON'S LAIR II
Software Projects singeing game!
The Readers Awards 1986
The results!
MAPPED SHORT CIRCUIT and VAMPIRE
HEAD OVER HEELS!
Jon Ritman's follow up to
Batman

NEMESIS™

The Final Challenge



ISSUE 18 April 1987



AMTIX!

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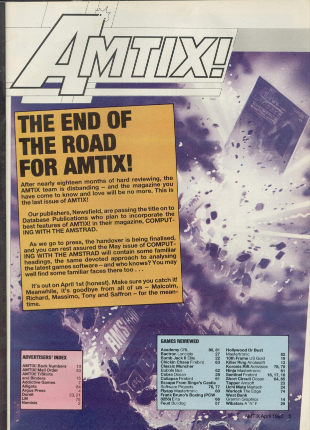
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HOT STUFF FOR APRIL

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THE END OF THE ROAD FOR AMTIX!

After nearly eighteen months of hard reviewing, the AMTIX team is disbanding – and the magazine you have come to know and love will be no more. This is the last issue of AMTIX!

Our publishers, Newsfield, are passing the title on to Database Publications who plan to incorporate the best features of AMTIX! in their magazine, COMPUTING WITH THE AMSTRAD.

As we go to press, the handover is being finalised, and you can rest assured the May issue of COMPUTING WITH THE AMSTRAD will contain some familiar headings, the same devoted approach to analysing the latest games software – and who knows? You may well find some familiar faces there too . . .

It's out on April 1st (honest). Make sure you catch it! Meanwhile, it's goodbye from all of us – Malcolm, Richard, Massimo, Tony and Saffron – for the meantime.

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For the back numbers offer see page 10.

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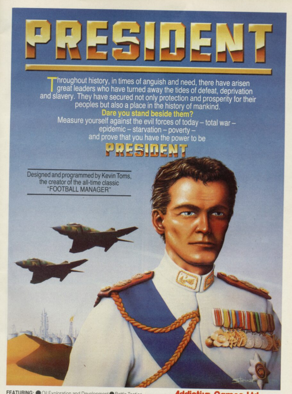
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'THIS OFFER INVALIDATES PRICES ON PAGE 15!!'



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Dare you stand beside them?
Measure yourself against the evil forces of today – total war – epidemic – starvation – poverty – and prove that you have the power to be
PRESIDENT
Designed and programmed by Kevin Toms, the creator of the all-time classic "FOOTBALL MANAGER"
Steinar



HELPING AMSTRADS

Dear Saffron
I suppose you lot up there consider yourself a pretty intelligent bunch and I wondered what your feelings were on computers in the remedial class room – I've taught in one for three years. A remedial classroom is where all the members of the school community, who are educationally sub-standard, are taught separately. Usually these are the kids that bunk off and consequently are not allowed to touch the expensive computer equipment which is bought for the more 'privileged' kids in the school.

The thing is these more advanced kids have already wrecked three Spectrums and a RML 380Z resulting in more than £4,000 being needed to replace the equipment.

Anyway, eventually I decided to bring my own computer into the classroom to help the kids with their reading. To do this I wrote a *hangman* type program which used a little Owl as an overseer which would shout words of encouragement or despair from the speech synthesiser. Believe it or not the kids flourished on it.

Now because the kids were enjoying this form of learning it was agreed that the Remedial department would get its own computer and specially written software. On the day I left I was told that the computer would be bought and installed next term.

About a year later I met the now Ex-head of the Remedial department and she told me that about a week after the computer had been bought the Computer Studies teacher had taken it for use with his own pupils. It was demolished a week later. This resulted in the borough saying no more computers were to be bought for the school.

I still keep asking myself why the pupils within the Remedial department, who respected the computer and got the most out of it, were deprived of a computer by the so-called intelligent pupils who, because they think they are more intelligent, can get away with anything.

So, what do you think? Should computers be used in remedial classes or just left to the intelligent ones?
J R Gigney, Cold Norton, Chelmsford.

Ah, I've not had much experience with computers in schools – before my time. However, Richard taught in a primary school for a year before arriving in Ludlow so I'll hand you over to him . . .
"Personally, I'm convinced that computers work extremely well as learning aids. Computers can occasionally make things easier to understand like using *Logo* to explain Geometry and shapes and I've also used a *hang-man* type program to encourage spelling. Computers are going to be in use everywhere by the time this generation leave school – and a lot of people already use them for business control – so as far as I'm concerned, everybody should have access to them. But like you said, as long as they are treated and handled properly".
And I think I fully agree with Richard.
ST

AND NOW, THE END IS NEAR . . .

Alack, alas! O fateful day that I even have to be part of you.,'Tis a far, far nobler thing I do now . . . Out damned spot . . . What light upon yon window breaks? . . . Is this a dagger I see before me? . . . O like plated Mars . . . Like the moon and stars I shall rise and fall . . .

Sorry – I usually go into Willy Shakespeare mode when I become despondent. Yes, the last OTS has finally arrived. But don't worry yourselves about my sudden end, I'm trogging back off to London (home of millions of Indian restaurants, designer flats and raunchy night life – bliss) to pursue my career in the fashion industry. The Saffron Collection is already well under way, and by the end of the year I expect to see all you young 'n' trendy girlies and blokes in the latest, up to the minute Saffronwear. Unfortunately, the Super Saffron cat suit, as featured on page 11, will not be available as part of the collection. No, I'm going for the 'free and easy' look . . . just scan the pages of Vogue in the autumn.

Well, I've really enjoyed my time here and OTS is something I've always enjoyed hosting – I hope it's been a pleasurable read for you too! I'll miss you all but life goes on . . . Just do whatever makes you happy and don't judge yourself by other people. Do what you think is right, what makes you feel comfortable. Enjoy it – you only live once.

Honestly, I feel like a mother to you all.

GRUMLIN FAN

Dear Saffron
Firstly, thanks for a fabulous mag. Since I have been buying it from February 1986 it has proved popular with everyone in my family. In fact even Max, our dog, likes to gnaw at it!! Before you scream 'blue murder' you'll be glad to know that he only destroyed one issue. That was the one before the Grumlins decided to take up residence in your pages. Could the Grumlins be keeping Max away from AMTIX! . . . ? Whether they are or not I hope that the Grumlins continue to reside in the pages of AMTIX!

As well as having praise for the Grumlins in my letter I also have a minor query. Why is it that 6128 owners should want two copies of the **Rainbird** *Art Studio*? Yes, well that's what you seem to think they want. The people who send in entries for the **Rainbird Gallery** must already have the *Art Studio* to draw their pictures; so why is it you give them another copy of the *Art Studio* as a prize?
G Stillwell, Uxbridge, Middlesex

The Grumlins do seem to like it here. The Rainbird Gallery prizes were a bit of a mix up on the Art Critic's part. The idea behind it all was that Rainbird would sponsor the Gallery – provide the *Art Studio* as prizes, and the A4 size blow-ups of the pictures. However, readers didn't have to use the *Art Studio* as a means of designing the pictures in the first place. I hope you understand now.
ST

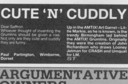
WE ARE holding Lloyd and old CrUBLY as our HOSTAges. We WILL Take ACTION unLess you stop BEING nasty to TONY CLARKE

(WHO?–ST)

(WHERE THIS come FROM?!!–ST)

YOU KNOW IT MAKES SENSE!

Ooooeerrr! Threatening notes become to pour in from the FTCA (Free Tony Clarke Association) – we're scared – we're also lying.



CUTE 'N' CUDDLY

Dear Saffron
Whoever thought of inventing the Grumlins should be given a rise. Not only are they cute and cuddly they are funny.

Paul Partington, Wimborne, Dorset

Up in the AMTIX! Art Garret – Little Markie, as he is known, is the trendy Birmingham lad behind the AMTIX! Grumlins. Originally they were the creation of John Richardson who draws Looney Jetman for CRASH and Umquat for LM.
ST

ARGUMENTATIVE OWNERS

Dear Saffron
I am taking some time in my school dinner hour to write to you, as I cannot stand it any longer. I have just come out of a school club type thing, as the most terrible argument has taken place. It is all about this petty thing called 'computer rivalry', the people concerned own Spectrums, Commodores, BBC, Plus 4s, Dragons (ha!) and of course Amstrads. Of course me being a 4th year, I can duff up the younger kids if they say nasty about Arnold, but the ones that get right up my nose are the whingeing Commodore owners, they punch anyone who insult their 'oh so very brilliant piece of plastic!'.

What I want to know is why go on about such a petty thing, as all computers have their good and bad points (I don't know about the Dragon though!)

Rhett Middleton, Dyfed, Wales

It always happens. I remember I got into a very heated discussion on the same subject at college – I had a Spectrum at the time. What people fail to realise is that all computers have their strong and weak parts and it just has to be accepted.

ST

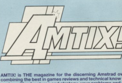
FROM THE LAND OF THE KIWI

Dear Saffron
It is interesting to compare England with New Zealand and see, that although we are many thousands of miles apart, we still have very much in common (Amstrad-wise at least). I suppose I am lucky in the fact that as a dealer in Amstrad computers, I can keep up to date with the latest hardware and software releases. Certainly yourselves and other less esteemed magazines help me a great deal, not just in new programs but also in what to stock by using the Gallup and Reader's Polls as an overall guide to which software is popular and which isn't. The one thing that I have noticed is that over here piracy is nowhere near as popular as it is in England.

I believe a large factor of this is that the majority of dealers (such as myself) refuse to stock any program or hardware add-on that will allow software to be illegally copied. Although this may seem a bit drastic, I believe it has worked very well, and most software carries a lifetime guarantee – nearly all dealers I have spoken to will replace any faulty tape or disc without hassle if it has a genuine fault. Now you can't be fairer than that!!

Michael O'Brien, New Zealand

It's very interesting to hear how everything works over there – I'm tempted to visit NZ one day. Sounds a good place. Cutting down on stocking pirating devices is a good thing – as I've said many a time – piracy is stealing, and until people begin to realise this, or prices drop, it's an epidemic we're going to have to live with here.
ST



AMTIX! is THE magazine for the discerning Amstrad owner, combining the best in games reviews and technical know how, coping with adventures and strategy, your problems and ours! You shouldn't miss out on this, but if you haven't been able to get hold of earlier issues of AMTIX! we do have some in stock — and after all, you wouldn't want any holes in your AMTIX! binder when it comes along later this year, would you? So order now!

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BACK NUMBERS, AMTIX! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

No 1 November 1985
* Complete Guide to games I * Lightpens * Dun Darach Map * Pyjamarama Map * Everyone's a Wally Map * Lords of Midnight Map * CP/M * Tape to Disk Utilities

No 2 December 1985
* Complete Guide II * Fighting Fantasy * Alien 8 Map * Word Processing with Tasman * FORTH on the Amstrad

No 3 January 1986
* Gargoyle Games Profile * Knight Lore Map * Public Domain CP/M * Computer Art * Extension ROMs * RS232

No 4 February 1986
* Dynamite Dan map * The world of Infocom adventures * Amsoft visit * The first batch of results * Gremlin graphics, the journey, the people and the story * Introduction to educational software * Preview of the The Music Processor.

No 5 March 1986
* Cauldron map * More competition winners * More educational software * the improved AMX Mouse * the Vortex expansion board.

No 6 April 1986
* Maps of Gunfright, Mar... Weeks in Paradise * A review of Pyrad... * A visit to the Ocean and Imagine sof... ...auers awards * The Amtix! questionnaire * y... ...ompetition winners.

Sold out

No 7 May 1986
* Battle of the Chess Giants * The world of PSS * A transatlantic interview with Infocom (pt 1) * Reviews of Rainbird's Music System and the Melbourne Draw * Competition winners.

No 8 June 1986
* Maps of Shadowfire and Bounder (parts 1 and 2) * The concluding part of the Infocom interviews * Spotlight on Activision * A dissection of Artificial Intelligence * More competition winners.

No 9 July 1986
* Maps of Movie and Nomad * How to beef up your Joyce for £20! * A review of Laser Genius * Competition winners galore.

No 10 August 1986
* Budget Special * Maps of Heavy on the Magick and Cauldron 11 * A visit to Level 9 * Spoilt for Joyce including a review of Money Maker * Lots more competition winners.

No 11 September 1986
* Maps of Fairlight, Saboteur and Movie * The ultimate Joyce supplement including games reviews, a dust cover offer, typing tutorials and a chess comparison * Reviews of Promerge, a Silicon Disk Drive, a Miditrack and a Drumkit * The arrival of Lee Paddon, Richard Eddy, Tony Clarke and Saffron Trevaskis * The NEW look LOGO unveiled * The first brolly induced OTS * The new look reviews * Even more winners

No 12 October 1986
* First issue with new logo! * Tir Na Nog offer! * On The Spot with Saffron * Mega Adventures reviewed! * Mirage Imager! * Fanzines Explored! * Mapped Starquake, Jack the Nipper and Tir Na Nog * Short Story * First Challenge * Terminal Man * More winners!!

No 13 November 1986
* Saffron revealed! * Accolades for Revolution, Tomahawk, Trivial Pursuits * Saffron's Scoreboard! * Delta 4 Profile * PCW Show * Art Studio and Multiface 2 - Screwdriven! * Ricardo Pinto - Interviewed! * Tony wins a challenge * Mapped Doomdark's Revenge and Equinox * Winners and Fun, fun, fun!

No 14 December 1986
* Accolades for The Eidolon, T... Scooby Doo, Xeno, Ikari Warriors, The A... e Amstrad Show * Richard loses hi... Dare, Panzadrome * Competitions g... ...e new magazine, LM * Yet more winners

Sold out

No 15 January 1987
* Accolades for Heartland, Zombi, Thanatos The Destroyer, and Bobby Bearing in our Mega Christmas special * Mapped Eidolon, Druid and Glider Rider * Issue 0 of the new magazine, LM * The Newsfield joystick junkies inter title mega fight * Enough competitions to blow your mind!



IGNORE HIM!!
HELLO, I'M BRILLIANT.
SUGARMAN
TO TELL THE TRUTH, HE'S A LITTLE DEAF!
WHO DOES THAT SUGARMAN THINK HE IS?
HUSHED WISPER
DON'T LOOK AT ME... I'M VERY INSIGNIFICANT. SO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME...
SUPER SAFFRON
IN: SAFFY MEETS SUGARMAN!
SORRY. I THOUGHT YOU SAID TO SLAUGHTER YOUR HUSBAND
SCREAM! AARRG!
DISTRESSED WIDOW
SEE WHAT I MEAN!
OF COURSE I'LL BURN TEDDY FOR YOU, LITTLE GIRL...
SOB SOB
©RE + ST 1987
THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR
SUPER SAFFRON!
KATHOOM!
BY THE POWER OF THE BROLLY
A LONELY CLOUD
SUGAR
HERE I COME!!
DA! DA!
THATS GOT RID OF HIM!
TAKE THAT!
AND THAT!
THWACK!
LEMME OUT
AIRPORT
FRAGILE
OUCH!
LATER...
AND NOW TO TAKE OVER HIS COMIC STRIP!!
HERE I AM FOLKS!

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Dear Ms Elastikiss
It was *KNIGHT TYME*, up in the sky was a *RED MOON* surrounded by a blanket of shining *STARIONS*, there was a bit of a *LOCOMOTION* and *CONFUZION* because *TECHNICIAN TED* was saying how he was going to *THRUST* his cold *JET SET WILLY INTO OBLIVION* and *BACK TO REALITY* at the same time in a *MICROCOSMICA* of a second, he was boasting he's got a *BOOTY. A CHILLER* of a thought really. *DYNAMITE DAN* warned of a *BOMB SCARE* in which he had planted a *SHORT'S FUSE* in Wembley Stadium where the *WORLD CUP* was being held.

I ran like a *TRAILBLAZER* to tell the *FOOTBALL MANAGER*, but I ended up bumping into *SPIKY HAROLD* who opened the *TRAP DOOR* and found a *KANE*, he said "*FINDERS KEEPERS*" and hit me. "*IT'S A KNOCKOUT*," shouted the *NINJA MASTER*. "*HIVE* got an *EXPLODING FIST*," announced *THE LEATHER GODDESS OF PHOBOS*. At this point *THE APPRENTICE* rushed into the street wearing only his *PYJAMARAMAS* and holding a *KETTLE*. "You look like a *ZOMBI*," said *JUNGLE JANE*, "anyone seen *TARZAN*?" she continued. "Oh, *BOULDER DASH*!" I shouted as I stepped in a dog-log which was dripping off the *ALIEN HIGHWAY*. Suddenly the *MASTER OF THE LAMPS* emerged, "*GET DEXTER*," he commanded, "you'll find him in the *CAVES OF DOOM*, so get running." I didn't want to go on this *TRIVIAL PURSUIT*, but I played along with it anyway and went to the caves and rang the doorbell – *PING PONG* it went.

I was expecting to find *ROLAND IN THE CAVES*, but instead I found that *KUNG FU MASTER, BRUCE LEE*. He opened the door, pretending to be *BATMAN* (He's got a *SPLIT PERSONALITY*) and was in a bit of a *SPINDIZZY* because *BARRY MCGUIGAN'S BOXING* had got the better of him. To my surprise he stuck his fingers up in a V shape and said "*SNODGITS* to you, matey!" He pointed his pistol at me – I had *GUNFRIGHT* – he was *BOUNDER* to get me any second now. So I threw a left hook and gave him a *POPEYE*.

At this point *HARVEY HEADBANGER* walked in shouting "In *THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN, WHO DARES WINS*!" "That's an *IMPOSSIBLE MISSION*." I replied, "Only the *COMMANDO*s can do that"! I needed some assistance, so I asked him where *RAMBO* was. "Across the *PACIFIC*, past the *COVENANT*, and by the *TAU CETI*s – Oh, and don't forget to take the *CAULDRON 2*!"

A *STORM* was gathering – a *TEMPEST* I muttered. Suddenly Noel Edmonds flew over the horizon in a *HELICHOPPER*, he was just about to throw down the golden *GAUNTLET* when an *ALIEN 8* him! For five *FUTURE KNIGHTS* I listened to *HACKER* Bilk playing some jazz. After the show the alien **ZZAP**ed me, **CRASH**! my face fell off. I had enough **AMTIX!** for one night and decided to go off and try and find some real **AMSTRAD ACTION** (what I think is a wealty hexilant ragazine an' valu 4 money).

The infinitely peculiar Glenn Carey, The Syndrome Clinic, Coverack, Cornwall

PS Sorry the letter is in crayon – they don't allow sharp objects here!

PPS Quick nurse I feel it coming on again.

PPPS Can I have your autograph on a picture?

PPPPS The picture must be of a Grumlin's party on Mary Whitehouse's lawn.

I think Glenn has a little bit of the *MARBLE MADNESS* there, don't you?
ST

MORE SPEED, LESS HASTE

Dear Saffron
I am writing to complain about the qualities of the games available. Unlike most, I don't mind paying £10 for a game, as long as it's good value, and can be played over and over again.

But I just can't understand why companies like **Ocean** keep producing such awful games like *V*, *It's a Knockout*, and *Knight Rider* – and have the nerve to charge a tenner for them. Surely they must worry about a bad reputation. **Palace Software** and **Vortex** on the other hand might not release as many games as **Ocean** but when they do they are exceptional quality. If only **Ocean** programmers would pay as much attention to their programs as **Ocean** spend on their advertisements and licensing deals.

By far the most consistent software house must be **Elite**, they are one of the most underrated companies around. Also I would like to praise them for producing all their software in a near-normal loading form.

Sye Law, Littleborough, Lancs

I liked your piece about time versus money on advertising. However, I'll think you'll agree, Ocean have really done us proud with *Short Circuit* and *Head Over Heels* this month. Both superb products.
ST

OLI'S TALENTS

Dear Saffron
Guess what I got for Christmas? An Amstrad! I used to own a Spectrum (Okay, stop laughing . . .) but I handed it down to my brother who is nine and just starting off in the computer world. I used to get CRASH, but I've now changed to AMTIX! as, for me, it provides everything I want to know.

When I went back to school everyone asked me what I had for Christmas. When I told them I had an Amstrad they just walked away turning green with envy. Anyway, I was sitting in this really boring history lesson reading a book called The Middle Ages. I turned to the centre pages and there was an amazing drawing of the Battle of Agincourt. I wondered if Oliver Frey could draw that well. And there was HIS signature! Explain that . . .

Neil Davis, Harvington, Worcestershire

Oliver's talents range to all sorts of things from book covers to cassette inlays (Beach Head II) and he also did a great deal of work for the War Picture Library. And if you remember the comic strip at the beginning of the first Superman film – well, that was all our own Oli's work. Worra hero!
ST

GET IT RIGHT

Dear Saffron
Help! In the March 1987 issue, page 8, you had a letter from Richard Spence, titled 'A Price Plea'. The letter stated, in part . . .

" . . . A great budget release from **Code Masters** – *Terra Cresta*. It's brilliant, brilliant work from Stephen Curtis - author of *Into Oblivion*, *Nonterraquerous* and *1942* – **Elite**'s awful attempt at a game . . . "

Please could you state that I didn't write *1942*! Or ever will! Or ever want to!

I have written 21 games to date, and I'll be the first to admit that not all have been as well received as *Terra Cognita*, *Nonterraquerous* or *Soul of a Robot*. But *1942* - NEVER!

By the way there is a built in cheat facility in *Terra Cognita*. Pressing all the keys that spell 'CURTIS' at the same time and then pressing fire to start the game gives you infinite lives.

Stephen Curtis, Lydney, Glos

Oh, Stephen, my humblest apologies for letting that slip through. You poor thing – being blamed for *1942*. Never mind though, I'm sure this has cleared your name now. Thanks for the bijou tipette, although Tony will be well angry at me for trying to make a take-over bid for his section.
ST

LOTSA MONEY?

Dear Saffron
You said you wanted more views on **LM** . . . well here they come. **LM** is an interesting magazine which tells you all those interesting facts you never really wanted to know, so I like it.

I believe that it's a bit highly priced at one pound, perhaps a drop in twenty to twenty five pence would make it more attractive to poor deprived teenagers like *moi*. Most other teenage magazines like SMASH HITS cost around fifty pence.

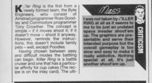
I must say Saffron, I did love the picture of you in February's issue of **LM** in the centre pages, but in saying this it might discourage girls and weak hearted boys from buying it, although it won't stop me.

Glenn (Saffron Fan) Harvey, Co Down, Northern Ireland

Now, get this straight, Glenn old bean, that was not me on the centre spread of LM – it was an imposter. Honest. As to your comment on the price . . . Smash Hits is a weekly mag selling for 45p a time which works out at £1.80 a month. LM brings you Smash Hits and a whole lot more for only £1 a month. Okay?
ST

KILLER RING

Reactor, £8.99 cass, joystick or keys



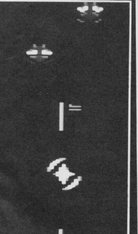
Killer Ring is the first from a newly formed team, the Byte Engineers, who consist of Amstrad programmer Ross Goodley and Commodore programmer Tony Crowther. The concept is simple – if it moves shoot it; if it doesn't move – shoot it anyway. However, reminds the instructions, this doesn't include family pets – well, except Poodles.

Having chosen between easy and difficult modes the battling can begin. *Killer Ring* is a battle cruiser and one that has a particular affinity for cup cakes (The recipe is on the inlay card). The ultimate objective is to blast your way through seven waves of enemy fighters to finally reach the Supreme Spacefighter, in his spaceship, and rip his heart to sheds by blasting it with lasers.

Mass — CRITICISM

I was not taken by KILLER RING at all as it seems to me to be just an undated space invader shoot'em up. The graphics are presentable and serve their intended purpose but the overall gameplay is too slow and easy to make it really addictive. Nothing special at all, it's just another shoot'em up.





Each wave begins at the top of the screen and individual aliens swarm down in a pre-determined pattern. Every one has to be obliterated with the laser which can fire up and down before proceeding onto the following screen. If the difficulty level is set too hard the beam, that scrolls vertically, must be transversed before shooting the hordes of aliens. Progressing through the screens other alien formations become apparent – and some of their sidekicks whiz around the screen generally causing havoc.



Anthony — CRITICISM

KILLER RING can be quite an enjoyable game if you are into fairly slow, average shoot-em-ups, but if not steer clear of it. The graphics are not the best ever seen, but some of the effects, such as the ring's halo, are done well. Once mastered, KILLER RING is much too easy, even on the difficult level. The music is standard David Whittaker stuff – no bass – and repetitive, and becomes an annoyance while playing, although the sound effects are not much better.

Richard — CRITICISM

KILLER RING has instant appeal – wave after wave of marauding aliens, albeit a bit slow. At last you finally reach the final zone blasting to get through and then . . . it's back to level one again. After that it all becomes repetitive – especially as you begin to recognise the alien formations. Colour and graphics are used to a good effect, however, action slows down when a lot is happening on screen. It's a pity more wasn't added to the game structure because as it stands it's all a bit limp.

After battling through the seven waves you come face to face with the Supreme Spacefighter sitting comfortably in a well armed ship. Before his heart can be blown his ship must be destroyed – achieved by continually firing until it finally disintegrates leaving an open pathway for your laser.

Having killed of the Spacefighter it's back to wave one to do it all over again, but this time it's just that little bit harder . . .

PRESENTATION 68%
Generally good with several flexible options.

GRAPHICS 70%
Not many but well drawn and animated.

SOUND 69%
Good theme tune that can be switched on or off.

PLAYABILITY 65%
Very easy to get through the initial waves.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 60%
And the waves still keep coming . . .

VALUE FOR MONEY 62%
Slightly overpriced for a limited shoot 'em up.

OVERALL 64%
An enjoyable shoot 'em up that won't keep your interest for long.

WEST BANK

Gremlin Graphics, £4.99 cass, £7.99 disk, joystick or keys

Gremlin are still expanding their empire and this time with a new mid-price range for games retailing around the five pound mark. *West Bank* is the first of this new race and takes the shape of a quick response shooting game. The West Bank is one of the most fashionable establishments in South Dakota – all and sundry desire the profits hidden behind the bank walls. You are the only thing between the money and them.

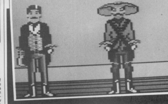





Richard

CRITICISM

Addictive or what! WEST BANK is an extremely simple concept – a test of recognition and fast reactions that is so playable. Apart from the screeching music it's a really good game and at this budget-esque price well worth a fiver. It's really easy to become trigger happy and quite often I found myself shooting down the good guys. The graphics are reasonable and add to the game, but the scroll is a bit jerky. The intermission shoot out really tests your reflexes.



The view of the bank consists of 12 doors, although three can be seen at any one time, and a deposit must be collected from each of the doors. There are different characters that may appear when a door opens and all with their individual characteristics. Some try to kill outright and must be shot at immediately; some may come with honourable intentions and then decide to draw and raid the bank. However, if these are shot before they have drawn one of your five lives will be lost. Luckily there are a few citizens who deposit money in good faith – learn to recognise these characters as if you shoot them by mistake another life goes down the pan. There is also one very tricky character, Bowie the dwarf, he appears at the doors with four hats on his head shoot them away and he will reveal if he is carrying either a bomb or a deposit. If he is shot when he reveals his bomb another life is taken.

Having taken a deposit from the first three move on to the next until a deposit has been taken at each of the 12 doors. The bank is now full and three of your arch enemies appear and draw randomly – shoot them in the right order and your score goes sky high. If not – it's bye bye to another life.

To win you must survive two days at *West Bank*. Each day is split into nine stages, the last two stages take place at night and are extremely dangerous. However, what lies behind those two days is anyone's guess – can you survive two days?


Mass

CRITICISM

WEST BANK is one of the most addictive games I've played for a long time. It is a pure test of reaction and recognition with a very nice interlude quick draw shoot 'em out. The ability to chose from three levels to start makes the game more interesting and beginning on level six gets you really glued to the screen as the action becomes fast and furious. After playing the game for a long while the shooting on levels 15 and upwards becomes purely instinctive as you are given next to no time to react. A real test of skill for any would-be gun slinger.

Anthony

CRITICISM

At last the price of games is becoming more as it should be, and at the price WEST BANK is a nice little game. The action is fast, the graphics well defined and smooth, and the sound of a good quality. The game, on the other hand, is a very simple idea, which will have you playing regularly, though maybe not for long periods.

PRESENTATION 76%
Choice of difficulty levels – generally good.

GRAPHICS 75%
No mix ups – clearly visible.

SOUND 70%
Reasonable Wild West type tune and good effects.

PLAYABILITY 83%
Instantly appealing . . .

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 80%
A game that can be picked up and played at any time.

VALUE FOR MONEY 86%
Excellent value for a fiver.

OVERALL 80%
A really enjoyable quick reflex game.



THE SENTINEL

Firebird, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, keys only

Defy me Synthoid? Fool! Do you not realise who – what – I am? Do you really imagine that I, *The Sentinel*, have roamed the universe, conquered 10,000 planets, simply to be obliterated by a worthless collection of energy units? Leave my domain – or perish!

The Sentinel – an apparently powerful, intangible being whose downfall is its greed. Its lust for power has already given it sovereignty of 10,000 worlds, and unless dealt with it will claim our planet as a further addition to its kingdom. The only method of destruction is from a Synthoid. This is a being with similar properties to *The Sentinel* whose sole purpose is to locate its enemy's planets and eradicate him from them.

A Synthoid is a robot powered entirely by thought, capable of absorbing and manipulating energy to defy the ominous threat. The player cast in the role of the Synthoid is transported to the nearest planet ruled by *The Sentinel*. The planets are all displayed from the view of the Synthoid and are fashioned into landscapes comprising of 3D solids arranged to form hills, valleys and chequered plains on which trees are planted.

The destruction of *The Sentinel* is achieved by absorbing it – however, the Synthoid can only do this

Viewed in first person perspective, the landscape comprises 3D solids forming hills and valleys, with occasional trees and boulders.



when its base square is in view. Therefore the Synthoid must work his way up to a position above *The Sentinel*'s vantage point. This rule for absorbing also applies to any other object on the landscape.

The Synthoid isn't detected by *The Sentinel* until it starts disturbing the energy balance. *The Sentinel* cannot move from its podium at the highest point on the landscape – it simply revolves 30 degrees at a time to find the cause of the energy displacement. If the Synthoid is discovered, *The Sentinel* drains its energy – without energy the Synthoid ceases to exist and fades into oblivion.

The distribution of energy is an important element of the game. Energy in its simplest form is a tree – worth just one unit. The Synthoid can absorb these, but as they are a base element, *The Sentinel* is unable to. Two units of energy form boulders, these are used as building blocks to stand upon. *The Sentinel* can absorb boulders – but he is unable to hoard the energy units. Instead they are re-distributed across the landscape in the shape of trees. The final form of energy construction is a Synthoid shell – used for transportation across the landscape.

The Synthoid is an entity that cannot physically move. It can only transfer its energy from one shell to another, providing the base of the square on to which it wishes to move is visible. When the Synthoid has transported, the old shell can be re-absorbed and is worth three energy units. Energy cannot be destroyed or created; it can only be re-distributed in different forms.

■ **Computer games have progressed through many stages - from early platform games to great graphical adventures. However, I think I've just witnessed the conception of another – a new breed. A totally original game – there's nothing to compare it with. What makes THE SENTINEL so revolutionary is that it is 100% game – the graphics and sound aren't special they're just essential extras. It may take some time to get into, but when the action hots up you'll wish there was more time to move around. It's like brain to brain combat – your mind and imagination against the mathematical computer, and it's this that makes it so perfect. It's worse than any drug, I'm in; I'm hooked and I just can't leave it alone . . . and I'm loving every minute of it.**

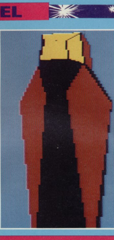
Richard

△ *The Sentinel stands aloft – peering down on the insignificant beings that reside on his planet.*

The Meanie – a minion of The Sentinel. An old Synthoid shell stands, absorption is near . . . ▽

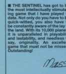
THE SENTINEL





Before the final defeat The Sentinel stands bravely determined not to flee. △

■ **THE SENTINEL has got to be the most intellectually stimulating game that I have played to date. Not only do you have to be quick-witted, you also have to be constantly aware of the lay of the land. With its 10,000 planets it is unparalleled in playability and lastability, and needless to say, originality. An excellent game that must not be missed. Outstanding!**



On some of the 10,000 worlds *The Sentinel* has placed its Guardians. These beings have the same power as their master, and should be dealt with before *The Sentinel* as they continue to be active after it has been disposed of.

If *The Sentinel* is unable to view the square on which the Synthoid resides it can't absorb its energy, and so it changes a nearby tree into a Meanie. The Meanie is unable to reap any of the Synthoid's energy but it can force it to hyperspace to another point on the landscape – three energy units are expended in hyperspace.

After finally absorbing *The Sentinel* itself, the Synthoid is unable to absorb anything else. It must then transport itself onto its enemy's square and hyperspace to another planet. The more energy there is left in the Synthoid's possession the further it can travel – but when starting on a planet the Synthoid always begins with ten units of energy.

Each planet has its own distinct security code. When this is known, the player can access a planet at any time – the code is simply entered before play begins. With 10,000 worlds to free, this task may take some time . . .

■ **Not too many games appear which can be described as original, and when they do it is usually down to Firebird. THE SENTINEL is just as revolutionary as ELITE was last year, and should have a much wider appeal. THE SENTINEL can best be described as a gigantic 3D chess-type game. The number of levels is mind boggling, and it is perfect in every respect. It may take the player years to work out tactics and reach the final level. This game will become a classic.**

PRESENTATION 98%
Immaculate, clear concise and informative instructions.

GRAPHICS 85%
Simple, solid characters – perfect for the nature of the game.

SOUND 75%
The effects are good, but there is no tune.

PLAYABILITY 97%
A fairly simple concept, but solving it is a different matter.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 99%
Hugely addictive due to the overwhelming challenge.

VALUE FOR MONEY 95%
Well worth it for such an unbelievable experience.

OVERALL 98%
In our view, it's the best game ever.



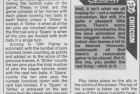


10th FRAME

US Gold, £9.99, joystick or keys

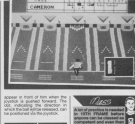
This is a single or multi-player ten pin bowling simulation following the normal rules of the game. These, in brief, are: the game consists of ten frames with each player bowling two balls in each frame unless a 'Strike' is scored. A 'Strike' is when all of the ten pins are knocked down with the first ball and a 'Spare' is when all the pins are floored with both balls in a single turn.

Scoring in *10th Frame* is automatic with the number of pins knocked down counting as points and added on to the score of the previous frames. A 'Strike' counts the ten pins plus the total number of pins the player knocks down with the next two balls. A 'Spare' counts the ten pins plus the number knocked down with the next ball bowled. If a 'Spare' or 'Strike' is achieved on the last frame then the player gets one and two extra bowls respectively. A player must bowl 12 consecutive strikes to obtain the maximum score of 300 points.



Richard — CRITICISM

Well, it isn't what we all hoping for – not a realistic conversion. But still, it's quite a pleasant little game. There's some annoying drawbacks, like the slow animation and the sluggish action. The colour also leaves a lot to be desired. However, underneath all that there's a reasonable game to be played. But if, like me, you prefer the real thing – stick to it.



Play takes place on the ally in the centre of the screen. The top of the screen is taken up with the name of the player currently bowling and his previous scores.

An animated figure of a man can be positioned by moving the joystick left and right. A small dot will appear in front of him when the joystick is pushed forward. The dot, indicating the direction in which the ball will be released, can be positioned via the joystick.

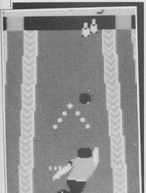


Anthony — CRITICISM

For all its drawbacks – bad colour scheme and pathetic sound – 10TH FRAME is quite an enjoyable game. It is much better if you get a few friends to play too, as the real joy of the game is team participation. Playing alone does reduce the enjoyment of the game but it can still be worth playing. The ability to set up different skill levels for individual people is a great boon when a family is playing; after all a five year old's timing may not be as good as mum and dads. If you are into family or team participation games then buy 10TH FRAME, otherwise take a long look at it before parting with ten quid.

Mass — CRITICISM

A lot of practice is needed in 10TH FRAME before anyone can be classed as competent and even then the game is marred by the slow inconsistent gameplay. Just when you think you've got it right to make the ball go straight it suddenly hooks off to the left and this, in the professional level, is disastrous as you will almost certainly miss the pins. There is little margin for error. Although demoralising when things go wrong, the game does prove very satisfying when it is mastered and your bowling is up to par. Even with its faults 10TH FRAME is a neat and welcomed simulation of a very popular sport – I must say I like it.



In the bottom right is situated the 'speed/hook' indicator. Holding down the fire button will cause the speed bar to rise up the left hand side of the indicator at which two speed markers appear. Releasing the fire button at the first will give the minimum ball speed and vice versa. In rapid succession another bar will appear moving down the right hand side of the indicator – pressing the fire button here, at one of three markers, will dictate the the amount of 'hook' put on the ball. The more hook put the more it will veer to the left.

The person with the most points at the end of the *10th Frame* is the winner.

PRESENTATION 76%
Step by step instructions, easy learning level.

GRAPHICS 57%
Nice character animation, slow bowling.

SOUND 32%
No tune, garish sound effects.

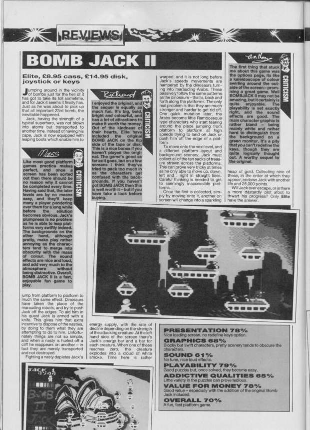
PLAYABILITY 70%
Difficult to start but becomes easy with practice.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 65%
More compelling when playing with a crowd.

VALUE FOR MONEY 61%
Novel simulation though not much of a game for a tenner.

OVERALL 63%
A nice introduction to a popular indoor sport.


SIGMA 7
Commodore 64 available November 20th
Spectrum & Amstrad available February
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software getting harder . . . .



BOMB JACK II

Elite, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Jumping around in the vicinity of bombs just for the hell of it has got to take its toll sometime, and for Jack it seems it finally has. Just as he was about to pick up that all important 23rd bomb, the inevitable happened.

Jack, having the strength of a typical superhero, was not blown into atoms but transported to another time. Instead of having his cape, Jack is now equipped with leaping boots which enable him to jump from platform to platform to much the same effect. Dinosaurs have taken the place of the marauding robots, and try to push Jack off the edges. To aid him in his quest Jack is armed with a knife. This gives him that extra incentive to dispose of the nasties, by doing to them what they are attempting to do to him. Unfortunately things are not so simple, and when a nasty is hurled off a cliff he reappears on another – in fact they are merely transported and not destroyed.

Fighting a nasty depletes Jack's energy supply, with the rate of decline depending on the strength of the attacking creature. At the left hand side of the screen there's Jack's energy bar and a bar for each creature. When one of these reaches zero, the creature explodes into a cloud of white smoke. Time here is rather warped, and it is not long before Jack's speedy movements are hampered by the dinosaurs turning into marauding Arabs. These passively follow the same patterns as the dinosaurs – that is, back and forth along the platforms. The only real problem is that they are much stronger and harder to get rid off. One quick mutation later, the Arabs become little Ramboesque type characters who start tearing around the place jumping from platform to platform at high speeds trying to land on Jack or push him off the edge of a platform.

To move onto the next level, and a different platform layout and background scenery, Jack must collect all of the ten sacks of treasure strewn across the platforms. This can prove very tricky at times as he only able to move up, down, left and , right in straight lines. Careful thinking is needed to get to seemingly inaccessible platforms.

Once the first is collected, simply by moving onto it, another on screen will change into a sparkling heap of gold. Collecting nine of these, in the order at which they appear, endows Jack with another life and 25,000 points.

Will Jack ever escape, or is there a more dastardly plot afoot to thwart his progress? Only **Elite** have the answer.

Mass — CRITICISM

Like most good platform games practice makes perfect, and once a screen has been sorted out then there should be no reason why it cannot be completed every time. Having said that, the later levels are by no means easy, and they'll keep many a player pondering over them for a long while before the solution becomes obvious. Jack's plumpness is no problem as he is able to leap platforms very swiftly indeed. The backgrounds on the other hand, although pretty, make play rather annoying as the characters tend to merge into obscurity with the mass of colour. The sound effects are nice and loud, and add very much to the atmosphere without being distractive. Overall, BOMB JACK II is a fast, enjoyable fun game to play.

Richard — CRITICISM

I enjoyed the original, and the sequel is equally as much fun. It's big, bold, bright and colourful, and has a lot of attractions to make it worth the money. Out of the kindness of their hearts, Elite have included the original BOMB JACK on the flip side of the tape or disk. This is a nice bonus if you haven't played the original. The game's good as far as it goes, but on a few screens I think they've tried to pack too much in as the characters get confused with the backgrounds. If you haven't got BOMB JACK then this is well worth it – but if you have take a look before buying.

Anthony — CRITICISM

The first thing that stuck me about this game was the options page, its like a kaleidoscope of colour swirling around the outside of the screen – promising a great game. Well BOMBJACK II may not be amazing, but it certainly is quite enjoyable. The playability is set exactly right, and the sound effects are good. The main character graphic is rather bland – being mainly white and rather hard to distinguish from the background on a green monitor. It's a pity that you can't redefine the keys, though they are quite logically thought out. A worthy sequel to the original.

PRESENTATION 78%
Nice loading screen, no redefine keys option.

GRAPHICS 68%
Blocky but swift characters, pretty scenery tends to obscure the characters.

SOUND 61%
No tune, nice loud effects.

PLAYABILITY 79%
Good puzzles but, once solved, they become easy.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 65%
Little variety in the puzzles can prove tedious.

VALUE FOR MONEY 78%
Good value – especially with the addition of the original Bomb Jack included.

OVERALL 70%
A fun, fast platform game.

TAPPER

Amsoft Gold, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

After much waiting the Sega range is finally making an appearance on the Amstrad and the first arcade conversion is **Tapper** – a manic action game. The player has the chance of taking control of one of the most overworked (and underpaid, no doubt) bartenders in the world. Anybody would think there's been a drought the way customers flock to the bar! As the bartender improves he progresses through four different bars and every time the drinkers become more anxious for their soda to be served up.

To successfully advance through the scenes the bartender's ultimate aim is to serve all the thirsty customers as they approach the bar. The bars consist of four tables along which groups of people appear. The number of people varies from one person per bar on the beginner level to four on the expert level – and they're all incredibly thirsty. When one appears at the doorway the bartender must fill a soda glass from one of the pumps at the side of the screen and then sling it down the bar. The customer always catches it; but if one too many drinks are slung down the bar they smash into the wall resulting in a loss of one of the bartender's five lives. After the customers have swigged their last mouthful they may still want more and this continual drinking carries on until every one leaves. There are two rounds per bar and every time with more people than the last. When both rounds have been successfully completed the bartender may then move onto the next bar.

Some of the more pleasant customers occasionally leave tips – if they are collected it boosts the score. However, this has to be done quickly as customers are always wanting more and failing to serve one means another loss of life. When the tip is collected there is a cabaret act which the customers may stay still and watch but it doesn't last very long!

Between every level is an intermission game involving the rootin'est tootin'est wildest Soda Bandit in the West. Here there is one bar on which stand six cans of fizzy soda. The bandit takes five of them and then switches them around – the exhausted bartender has to find the one that hasn't been shaken up. However, failing to do that means another life disappears. The game finishes when the bartender has served successfully all the customers in every bar.

Mass — CRITICISM

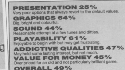
Well, it's been a long time a coming, and was it worth the wait? It might have been a year or more ago when it surfaced on other machines, but it's looking a bit tired now. The graphics chug along without much detail or animation and there's not a great deal to do. It has the simple playability and appeal of many arcade games of the same vintage, but hasn't really got the depth to keep you coming back for more. I hate the amateurish presentation when, at the end of the game, it always resets to the default options instead of the ones you last selected.

Anthony — CRITICISM

When TAPPER appeared in its other formats, several years ago, it was only of mild interest, but now it can only be considered boring. The presentation is dire, due to the options re-setting to their default values when a game is lost. Playing the game can be frustrating, although a little practice will have the player on the higher levels in no time, but the speed of play is much too slow. The bonus round was one of the few enjoyable parts of the game and proved quite a task. Not a game for those with slow joystick reactions, or owners with good games taste.

Richard — CRITICISM

TAPPER is another of those games which are instantly appealing but after a couple of hours of play it becomes very tiresome. The simple task of filling glasses, chucking them, and catching them becomes tedious even when the action becomes faster. Well, it doesn't actually get any faster, if anything it slows down, but it's just that more things happen at once. There are a few humorous elements to the game which spice it up a bit, but in the end you won't find yourself returning to it many times.



PRESENTATION 25%
Very poor options that always revert to the default values.

GRAPHICS 64%
Big, bright and colourful.

SOUND 44%
Reasonable attempt at a few tunes and ditties.

PLAYABILITY 61%
Enjoyable to begin with but may get frustrating.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 47%
May hold some lasting interest, but not much.

VALUE FOR MONEY 45%
Over priced for an old and not particularly brilliant game.

OVERALL 49%
A reasonable attempt at the arcade game but it becomes tedious.

UCHI MATA

Martech, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

If you thought all martial art simulations revolved around hitting your opponent, then think again. Judo, the sport which *Uchi Mata* is based upon, differs from other forms of self defence in that no weapons are used at all. Judo relies solely on using the strength and weight of an opponent against them.

Uchi Mata offers you the chance to throw either a computer or human controlled opponent around the screen in several bouts, scoring points in much the same way as Brian Jacks does in a live contest. Bouts are contested over two minutes, with points scored for the execution of successful throwing manoeuvres.

Throws are accomplished by moving the joystick in more than one direction, a sort of series of sweeping actions. However, before your opponent can be thrown you have to get a good grip, by quickly pressing the fire button when in range. When this grip is solid, a 'grip light' is displayed to signal that a throw may be attempted. Failing to perform a throw as soon as the grip light appears results in your opponent escaping from your grip.

When a throw has been performed, the referee appears in the top right hand corner of the screen with his hand outstretched to indicate how many points have been awarded for the throw. Either three, five, seven or ten points are given, depending on how your opponent lands. If you manage to perform a perfect throw, ie: the opposition lands flat on his back, then a full ten points are awarded and the bout is over. Otherwise, the player with the most points is declared the winner when the time limit expires.

When a move is made by an attacking player, the defending player can counter it if he is fast enough. A manipulation of the joystick can save a player even if he is thrown, and cause him to land on his feet.

Only four major moves are provided in the instructions, but by using the training option it is possible to discover undocumented throws and practice defensive moves.



Mass — CRITICISM

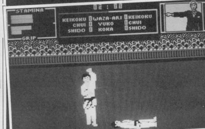
A judo simulation makes a welcome change from all of those other karate-style chop 'em up martial art games but unfortunately the graphics let the side down quite a lot. Despite this disadvantage the gameplay is not affected, and it becomes great fun just experimenting with all the throws available to you. Again UCHI MATA is one of those games that needs a lot of practice before a player can begin moving up the belts with ease and even then after level four it's really hard going. Nice game . . . shame about the execution.

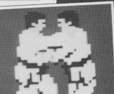
Anthony — CRITICISM

I'm all for the combat game, some of them can be quite fun, but what I hate is bad programming. The colour at the top of the screen for the mode one backdrop is dull, but what is more unforgivable is the flickery sprites. The programmer was either not bothered with improving on the Amstrad's firmware routines (essential for good sprites), or he has never used an Amstrad before. Either way, UCHI MATA is a pathetic piece of programming, on what could have been a decent game.

Richard — CRITICISM

There's potential for an excellent game here, but it just hasn't been carried out successfully on the Amstrad – it's a pity really, as there hasn't been a good beat 'em up since YIE AR KUNG FU. The graphics are really off-putting as they constantly flicker, making it difficult to understand what is going on a lot of the time. The moves may appear complicated, requiring a lot of joystick movement, but this can be overcome quite simply with a bit of practice as the inlay explains them very well. There's a good game there somewhere, it's such a shame that it doesn't emerge from behind the horrendously animated graphics.





PRESENTATION 75%
Well written manual and helpful on-screen information.

GRAPHICS 65%
Sufficient but hideously flickery.

SOUND 43%
Weak, unexciting bashing noises.

PLAYABILITY 68%
Clear instructions make it easy to get into.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 53%
The graphics will eventually put you off returning to it.

VALUE FOR MONEY 56%
The quality doesn't qualify the price.

OVERALL 61%
A good simulation spoiled by bad graphics.



THE MORIARTY ENGINE

Sherlock Holmes' arch enemy invents a machine with which to successfully play the Stock Market. Find out what an Analytical Engine is in this short story by RAY GIRVAN

"It is quite iniquitous Holmes," I said.

"My dear fellow," Holmes replied, preceding me up the 17 steps to our Baker Street rooms. "I can neither agree nor disagree unless you tell me to what you are referring."

I gesticulated with the rolled newspaper. "Another factory fire; a Nottingham lace mill burned to the ground. According to The Times, Hartmann the anarchist has claimed responsibility. The man must be mad!"

Holmes took out his key. "You may be right," he said. "But never presume madness merely because you do not understand the motive. It may be a diabolical one, I grant, but even then it will have its logic. Take Professor Moriarty . . . "

"Moriarty!" I scoffed. "Surely he is less of a mastermind than you believed?"

Not a month before, the said Professor had resigned his university post following investigations by Inspector MacDonald into his finances; not least, how one ostensibly earning £700 per annum could afford a Greuz painting valued at some sixty times that figure. I gathered he had set himself up as an army tutor here in London.

"Pah!" Holmes expostulated, hanging up his hat. "You vastly underestimate him Watson, no charges were brought. A man of his intellect could easily weather a few dark rumours. It is clear he is involved in some new villainy so time-consuming that he no longer chooses to maintain the imposture of academic respectability. A certain Mr James has recently shown uncanny success of stock market dealings. I have as yet no proof, but I feel sure it is the Professor acting under a pseudonym."

We entered the small sitting room, where I settled myself in a chair by the hearth; but Holmes paced restlessly.

Recognising the signs of boredom in my friend, I handed him my copy of The Times. Casting himself full-length on the sofa, he read for several minutes, then tossed the paper on the crumpled heap of dailies in the corner.

"I feel the black claws of stagnation in my brain!" he announced, springing to his feet. "Nothing but loose ends to tie up!" He took from its shelf one of his alphabetically arranged scrapbooks and leafed through it. "Selkies, and the case of the Hillswick gunner. I think the world is not yet ready for that tale, Watson. Skagway, Alaska. Skellern, whippet breeder extraordinaire. Ah, here it is!" He crossed out some entry. "So, Henry Slater, Moriarty's book-keeper and accountant, has been imprisoned."

"Surely that is excellent news, Holmes," said I, noting that he hardly looked pleased.

""Indeed? Once again, we trap the acolyte, but the master eludes us."

"Is there nothing to interest you in the papers?" I asked cautiously, changing the subject. "I thought perhaps you might wish to attend the lectures at the Royal Institute this afternoon."

"I saw the advertisement in the Telegraph, Watson. The planned topic of vegetable alkaloids has been replaced by that of the new science of economics, which interests me not a jot."

I shrugged. Holmes claimed to read only the criminal news and the agony columns, but often betrayed the fact that little in the newspapers escaped his eye.

Lighting his briar-root pipe, he resumed pacing. I feared he would soon reach for the small bottle on the mantelpiece; but as he passed the window, something in the street below caught his eye.

"I fancy we have a client," he said in a more optimistic tone.

A CLIENT FOR HOLMES

The bell rang, and Mrs Hudson showed in a young woman. She was short, dark-haired, and tidily – though inexpensively – dressed. Her face was rounded and serious, and she clutched her purse tightly in both hands.

Holmes, at his most courteous, showed her to a seat.

She smiled nervously, removing her gloves. "My name is Lucy Scrope," she said. "I would not normally bother you, Mr Holmes, but I fear for the life of my father, Edward."

Holmes puffed reflectively on his pipe. "You are not bothering me in the least, Miss Scrope. Tell me more about your father, and why you carry such an unaccustomed sum of money. You grip your purse as if your life depended on it."

"Two men abducted him from his shop in the Edgware Road last week. I should have told someone sooner, but I feared that going to the police would endanger him more."

"Was anything stolen?" Holmes asked.

"No. On the contrary, they left behind an envelope containing two hundred pounds. I could not afford your fee otherwise."

She opened the purse, but Holmes shook his head, frowning. "No doubt payment for your silence," he said. "But I wonder why. What is your father's trade?"

"A watchmaker."

Holmes tapped out his pipe, eyebrows raised. For once I assumed I shared his thought. Four days before, the body of another watchmaker had been picked from the river at Woolwich. He had vanished six months previously; but the autopsy showed he had died of natural causes only hours before being found.

Holmes sat slowly, placing the tips of his fingers together. "I agree that your father may be in danger," he said. "But I think his life is not in immediate peril. It may comfort you to know that I am already on the track of those responsible. Return home now – if all goes well, I will contact you tonight."

I showed her out. Returning, I took Holmes to task.

"How can you claim to have the matter in hand?" I exclaimed. "You have not stirred an inch from this room!"

He gave a short humourless laugh. "O ye of little faith, Watson! This is but the final confirmation that great matters are afoot. Unless I am very much mistaken, Professor Moriarty has built himself an Analytical Engine!"

"What on earth is that, Holmes?"

"A device capable of the most abstruse mathematical articulations. Babbage, its inventor, presented the idea to Mr Disraeli's government some twenty years before we were born . . . "

"I have heard of Babbage. He designed the cow-catcher on American trains, did he not?"

"Aye; and less commendably, skeleton keys. Regrettably, no engineering works then existing was capable of the precision required to build the machine. But now, with modern tools and Moriarty's mathematical genius, I believe it has been done."

THE MORIARTY ENGINE



"But how can you know of his plans?"

Holmes opened a hand, slapping the fist of the other into his palm. "Facts, Watson, facts. Each an insignificant premise, yet when juxtaposed forming an incontravertible conclusion. I asked myself what the following could imply - a malign mind involved in a new project; brilliant financial manipulations, but with no accountant. A lace mill fire. Disappearing watchmakers. The answer could only be the existence of an advanced calculating machine." He counted the points off on his fingers. "Take Salter's arrest. None of the usual bail or defence was forthcoming from the Professor's organisations. Ergo, his services are no longer needed. Yet Moriarty can still adroitly manipulate the stock market! Thus, he has found some better way."

"You think this . . . calculating engine could do that?"

"Secondly," Holmes continued, ignoring my interruption. "It was intended that the Babbage Engines should read their instructions from punched cards."

"As in a pianola?"

"Precisely; though more to the point, the Jacquard loom system. I would wager that not Hartmann but Moriarty set the mill fire to hide the theft of a card reader for his own machine. Finally, the vanishing watchmakers. Who better to employ for intricate work of cogs, gears and bearings? It seems that Moriarty's first unwilling helper died on him, and he needed a replacement."

I considered admitting that I was less than convinced, but thought better of it. Leaving Holmes deep in contemplation, I went to ask Mrs Hudson to make tea.

FOOTSTEPS

Later that evening I was eating dinner alone (Holmes had gone out earlier), when I heard footsteps on the stair. A stooped old man in frock coat and pince-nez spectacles shambled into the room.

"Be ye Doctor Watson?" he quavered.

"Hello, Holmes," I said, and continued my meal.

Somewhat disgruntled, he drew himself up to his full height, plucking off false mutton-chop whiskers. "I see your powers of observation are improving, Doctor," he said sourly. "I should fetch your old service revolver if you feel up to an adventurous night's work!"

"Where have you been, Holmes?"

"Disguised as an elderly academic, I attended the economics lecture. As I expected, Moriarty was there, no doubt to improve his knowledge of the workings of commerce. It was a simple matter to follow his hansom afterward. Now we shall pierce to the centre of the spider's web. Come, Watson, the game is afoot!"

A cab journey in the fading light took us to a shabby riverside street in Wapping. Holmes led the way down an alley between warehouses, halting at a rusty iron door. With the aid of Mr Babbage's more questionable invention, we were soon inside.

I had expected musty darkness. Instead, the air was clean and warm, the ceiling strung with electric lamps. I drew my revolver, and we picked our way between the tall crates.

"Behold!" Holmes whispered.

The Analytical Engine, if such it was, was situated in the centre of the room. It was not unlike a four-poster bed in shape and size, but with the space between the pillars packed with an intricate mechanism of brass on vertical steel spindles. To the right, a concertina of perforated card hung from a smaller assembly bolted to the Engine. A well-stocked work bench stood nearby.

There was a shuffling and clink of metal from our left. I raised my revolver, expecting Moriarty and his henchmen, but only a mild-looking little man came towards us, dragging a length of chain shackled to his ankle.

"I am Edward Scrope," he said weakly. "I implore you, whoever you are, free me before they return!"

"We shall do just that," said Holmes, kneeling to work on the padlock.

"If we are quick," I said. Moriarty can be arrested. Abduction is a serious charge. Shall I call Lestrade?

Holmes stared dreamily at the Engine. "I had hoped that the Professor would be here, but . . . " He stood, suddenly resolute. "No. Watson, take a file from that bench and cut the chain."

I saw the padlock lying on the floor. "But you have already freed . . . " Too late; Holmes was already elsewhere, presumably examining the Engine. I obeyed my instructions, and was through the link in minutes. I led Scrope to the exit.

Holmes joined us shortly. "I decided to leave the Professor to his own devices," he said, a furtive twinkle in his eye. "I cannot begrudge him a little honest mathematical research. Let us be on our way – I am sure Miss Scrope will be delighted to see her father safe and well."

"I do not understand," I admitted at breakfast a week later. "Why did you not have Moriarty arrested when the chance arose?"

Holmes sipped his tea. "Have you seen the stock exchange notes today?"

I rifled through the paper. "Oh, I see that the luck of Mr James has failed him disastrously."

Holmes chuckled and took a bite of toast. "Yes, Moriarty is financially ruined, which should temporarily curtail his activities."

"I knew a machine could never match the judgement of the human brain."

"Oh, it could," Holmes contradicted. "And did – while it worked correctly."

"You sabotaged the Engine?" I laughed.

Holmes snorted. "Hardly! I am no engineer, and anything so unsubtle would have been noticed and repaired. Cryptography is more my forte; by comparing the punched-card instructions with the notes on the bench, I was able to deduce the meaning of some of the patterns of holes. I took the opportunity to alter a few signs in the calculations." He glanced at the paper, smiling. "I admit the results exceeded my expectations."

"So you made it appear that Scrope escaped by his own efforts, so that Moriarty would think nothing amiss and use the Engine as planned?"

"Yes, indeed. He may never trust it again; when a tool fails him, he discards it."

"He will eventually deduce that you have caused him this trouble," I warned.

Holmes nodded grimly. "I fear so; there will be a final reckoning one day. But as for the Moriarty Engine, the world has definitely seen the last of that."



BACTRON

Loriciels, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

Funny lot the French. Not content with such products as *MGT* and *500cc* they've also released the first piece of 'antibiotic' software, which is not available on prescription. You take control of *Bactron*, a bag of antibiotics on legs, who has the precarious task of stalking viruses that have taken up residence inside a body.

Bactron is, essentially, an arcade adventure. The locations, all cells, are displayed in a colourful 3D forced perspective and are transversed by the designated exits on every screen – represented by gate posts either side of an exit.

Bactron's objective is to revive the enzymes which have been sterilised by the viruses. The enzymes appear in the form of small yellow blocks – which, when touched, are brought back to life and at the same time boost *Bactron*'s energy. The cells have a puzzle of varying difficulty within each one – this usually consists of moving blocks around to reach the exit. However, moving some blocks may reveal a secluded virus – one of the many who wander through the complex system of routes and passages.

Mass — CRITICISM

BACTRON has great colourful, well defined graphics, a lovely tune and sound effects. All you 3D adventure fans should just flip at this one. Surprisingly the main character moves very quickly and this only serves to improve the already excellent playability of the game. The presentation is really very impressive with a nice loading screen and a complete list of all the nasties you will encounter. Although I am not an avid 3D games fan this one really took my attention and that is saying something – Don't miss it!

Although *Bactron* is unable to kill the opposition out right he has the ability to spit with accuracy – spitting at any of the viruses renders them immobile for a set length of time giving *Bactron* a quick chance to escape.

Bactron is credited with three rejuvenations and, unless he can successfully complete his virus-fighting mission within the three, he will fail and the body will perish. The three lives are measured in lots of 99 energy units – spitting and touching the viruses reduces it by a few points. The status board also keeps tally of the score, and the body's temperature – exceeding 42 degrees is fatal!

Richard — CRITICISM

I love them! I just can't get enough of them! Another 3D adventure game – brilliant! BACTRON is a really enjoyable game – a great storyline that doesn't appear too ludicrous for the game. The presentation is nothing short of excellent. The loading screen is great, and the attract mode tops it off with a rock 'n' roll theme tune, a run down of the invaders and then goes into a demo mode which encourages you to play further. The graphics, both still and animated, work well. They are done in fatty mode but are defined accurately and they bring a humourous atmoshphere to the game. Mapping is essential if you're to complete it. The only drawback is that when there are several animated characters on screen the animation slows down considerably. However, if you're an avid arcade adventure fanatic don't pass on this one.

Anthony — CRITICISM

BACTRON has all the appeal of the other Loriciels games. The graphics are nothing short of brilliant, the sound of a good quality and the gameplay is as near perfect as you can get. The main character is very well animated, as are all the other creatures in the game. Like the other Loriciels games, BACTRON does rely heavily on the graphics and sound for its appeal, but the game is still fun, even though the task is a fairly simple idea. A game which would have been better priced at the seven pound mark, but is still fairly good value.

PRESENTATION 90%
Demo mode and monster parade works superbly.

GRAPHICS 87%
Some of the brighest and amusing seen for a long while.

SOUND 85%
Rock 'n' Roll theme tune plays on the title screen – good in game effects.

PLAYABILITY 86%
The action can get sluggish but on the whole very good.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 80%
Good sized maze that will keep you battling.

VALUE FOR MONEY 80%
Worth it for the sheer enjoyment.

OVERALL 86%
A neat 3D variant with a lot going for it.



COBRA

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

Crime's the disease, he's the cure. From the film of the same name, Sylvester Stallone makes his second appearance on our computer screens after his last adventure in *Rambo*. This time a player can take the role of Marion Cobretti, a vigilante cop of the legendary Zombi Squad. His mission is to rescue the beautiful fashion model, Ingrid Knutsen (43-23-40), from a bunch of psychotic killers and the phantom Night Slasher.

Cobra is a platform game with a lot of marauding and murdering thrown in for good measure. The action takes place across a horizontally scrolling street scene, with conveniently placed ledges along the walls providing handy jumping platforms.

The opposition prowl the streets, seeking to eliminate *Cobra*. *Cobra* has no weapons to begin with, and must be content with merely thumping his way through the enemy, they have all manner of weapons ranging from knives to massive rapid firing bazooka guns. *Cobra* can't be killed with just one shot (what a hero) – he can sustain several. However, no indication of how well his resilience is holding up is given.

Anthony — CRITICISM

At first sight COBRA seems to be a colourful game of skill, but after a few games the whole thing becomes very easy. The graphics are quite colourful in places, but their jerkiness puts the player off somewhat. The sound leaves a lot to be desired, just a repetitive tune which got on my nerves within the first few seconds. COBRA is one of those very average games that would have been better as a budget title.

Mass — CRITICISM

Initially there seems to be plenty to do in COBRA, but after a few goes it tends to fall into a monotonous pattern and completion of the first couple of levels becomes easy. The graphics are fine (apart from being slightly jerky), but they fail to complement the game – and the spruced up colour and character size from the Spectrum version were not really necessary. A game with nothing different to offer, falling into the average platform shoot 'em up class – rather disappointing.

Lots of windows face out onto the street, but only a few hide hamburgers. When *Cobra* picks up a burger, it provides him with an additional weapon. This can be a knife, a hand gun or the kill-everything-in-sight gun. Weapons remain in *Cobra*'s possession until they run out of power, a bar graph indicates their lasting power below the three weapon icons.

Cobra is split into three stages – each more difficult than the last. A level is completed by collecting all the burgers and killing off all the meanies – *Cobra* is then transported to his next heroic duty.

While this melee is taking place, Ingrid is receiving serious hassle from the enemy. *Cobra* has to locate her and rescue the poor damsel in distress. When found she becomes faithfully loyal and follows him – to complete the game *Cobra* must kill everything and still have the girl – just like the film!

Richard — CRITICISM

I was hoping for something special from this, especially as it did really well on the Spectrum. However, the one time a Spectrum-esque game could have gone down well they try and spice it up with more colour, bigger characters, and better sound. The result is little more than mediocre. The backdrops become very dull, although there is some humour when a window is opened and a hanging body or an axed man is seen. COBRA is a let down – it's very average.

PRESENTATION 49%
Insufficient instructions on the title screen and no high-score table.

GRAPHICS 65%
Colourful, but not particularly well animated.

SOUND 52%
Irritating tune that plays throughout.

PLAYABILITY 68%
Simple concept that is easy to understand and play.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 61%
It has a tendency to become very tedious after a few games.

VALUE FOR MONEY 59%
Nine quid is a lot to pay for an average game.

OVERALL 60%
An average platform shoot 'em up.

WIBSTARS

A 'N' F, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

If you've ever wondered what it's like to run a computer distribution company then why not tackle Billy Wibstar's job – manager and general minion at *Wibstars*. The action begins at a warehouse, the first stage in the game of four. Here amounts of stock must be decided upon. Drive the forklift truck around to pick up the desired amounts of tapes, disks and computers each with their different prices. There is £200 in the kitty to start with and the amount of stock that can be taken is dictated by this budget. If the budget is exceeded the forklift truck automatically exits this part of the game. However, if you plan carefully, it might be wise to hold onto some cash in case of any accidents that may befall you in further sections.

The second part takes place in the despatch bay – a long hallway viewed side on with overhead chutes from where the collected stocks come hurtling down. Billy, now in, and under control of the van, has the task of moving it left and right to collect the stocks as they fall from the chutes. When all the goods have been released from the chutes the van drives itself off and onto the third section.

From the warehouse it's a long drive to a shop where Billy has to deliver his goods. A vertically scrolling street scene paves the way which Billy, in the Wibstarsmobile, must follow. However, continually in front is a competitor's van but the silly fool has left his doors open and all manner of oddments fall out. These include hazardous junk which should be avoided as they cause damage to the van, but also tapes and disks which, if collected, boost your stocks. At the top right hand corner of the screen is a street map showing the route – there are many shops which may buy your stocks but it's a matter of finding who pays the best and this can only be done by trial and error.

Arriving at a shop the scene switches to Manic Miner-esque screen full of platforms, conveyor belts and disappearing bridges. Here all the cassettes, disks and computers in stock must be unloaded and taken to the office placed at the top of the screen. It is possible to take as many cassettes, disks, or computers around the screen as you wish simply by selecting the number at the start. The articles can only be pushed around, not carried. The first task is to get a parcel into the lift on the right hand side. However, if it is pushed under the lift it is squashed to a pulp. Then another one should be collected and the task started all over again. Unfortunately, you can not enter the lift when a parcel has been kicked in and this is where problems can really begin. The trick is to work out the correct timing for which an object can be pushed around the route. When all the stocks have been unloaded and delivered, or destroyed, return to the van and, if there is any money left, it's off to do it all over again and this continues until *Wibstars* become bankrupt.

Mass — CRITICISM

No tune, poor effects, extremely poor graphics and a pathetic gameplay makes WIBSTARS an absolutely awful product – I really can't see the point in releasing a game such as this. The driving the van sequence consists of little more than missing the mess and I can't see how the hell you are supposed to retrieve tapes or disks when they are surrounded by harmful objects without causing damage to yourself. Delivering the objects is a joke and almost impossible. In fact I gave up trying before I managed to successfully deliver a single item. Leave it well alone.

Richard — CRITICISM

I really took an instant dislike to this, but being a glutton for punishment I persevered but to no avail. WIBSTARS is one of those games where, no matter how hard you try, there's just no sense of achievement. The second game is infinitely frustrating – the objects come hurtling down the chutes so fast you just don't have a chance to catch them. The final platform type game is just a joke. The whole thing just seems so pointless – the route which the objects must be pushed around is so difficult to negotiate it gets extremely tedious. Once you've found the correct route then it's no problem – but then there's no game to play. Small graphics, and no music doesn't help to make it better and it didn't hold any attraction for me at all.

Anthony — CRITICISM

I am always saying that the software industry should take a step back of about two years and start again, but WIBSTARS is more like a throw back to the dark ages. ZX80 graphics and sound just don't cut it, even when games like 3D monster maze appeared. The driving bit of the game is nothing more than dodge the debris, even trying to pick up the diskettes and cassettes that sometimes appear results in a hefty repair bill. The delivery screen is very hard to complete, even when you know the route, and the process of getting the objects to the top is repetitive and boring. I would be surprised if the programmer ever admits to doing this one.

PRESENTATION 56%
Adequate but doesn't help the game much.

GRAPHICS 48%
Mostly small and indistinct.

SOUND 23%
The occasional bleep and burping.

PLAYABILITY 32%
All stages are simple except for the last one.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 20%
After a couple of plays you won't return to it often, if at all.

VALUE FOR MONEY 28%
Highly overpriced for such an ordinary game.

OVERALL 37%
A well below average and monotonous offering from A 'n' F.



Woe is me! Sob, Sob, Sniffle. This is my last AMTIPS! as this is the last AMTIX! in its present form. Let's go out in style with as many tips as possible. From Cy Booker we not only have a poke for *Gauntlet* that should keep your character trundling along for the whole game, but also a great program that cures the Highscore Table bug on the disk version. But first of all let us kick off with some tips for *Light Force*.

LIGHT FORCE

(FTL)

These tips come from **Matthew Lloyd** of **Leicestershire**, a great mapper I am told by Saffron.

Always keep moving side to side, but make sure that you don't collide with the enemy (isn't that the point)? Fire at all times, and with the above move, you will destroy all the missiles that home in on you.

Keep at the bottom of the screen all the time except when on the planet's surface (and I mean surface, not half space, half ground), then keep about 3 cm from the bottom of the screen.

All destructible enemies can be destroyed by one shot, control centres need four, and everything else needs three shots to be destroyed. On the Ice planet you will be able to shoot a certain building for a shield, on the jungle planet you receive a life instead, (both are shown as smiling suns when the building is destroyed). The shield can only be used once so save it until necessary – it will destroy all enemies.

Indestructible enemies are yellow rocks, missiles in pairs and bombs.

Homing missiles are white rocks and white helmets.

A very good joystick is recommended, as is watching the demo to see what is coming on a certain level.

KAT TRAP

Streetwise

Matthew's second contribution is a host of tips for KAT TRAP that should get you past all the nasties.

As you start walking you will encounter humanoid enemies. These shoot back at you making life difficult. To destroy these you fire bullets and duck as soon as the enemy is destroyed, count to two, and stand up. As your bullets continue off the screen it is a good idea to keep firing at all times.

Next you come up against some balls. The black ones can be shot with bullets, the brown ones cannot, but they also cannot harm you, MT-ED just bounces off them. Always jump holes in the ground as they either open up and swallow MT or a hand comes up and grabs him. Grenades will kill anything but use them carefully. At one stage of the game you will see ghosts rushing towards you, these are harmless, but don't mistake them for fire demons; who can be destroyed with H2o.

In the lake, grey fish can be destroyed by laser. The black ones are a different kettle of fish (groan-n-n-n), and these must be destroyed by using the arrows left by Lobin Hood (who is this guy ??) in the forest.

At a certain time you will encounter tanks, which will turn into an oven when shot with the laser. (Roast cat, Droo-oo-oo-ooll!).

For the later levels just follow the above, and you'll soon be able to do it. If you can't be bothered to change weapons, throw a grenade.

Matthew says: "Missiles are useful, but it would be too easy if I gave you the answer on a plate. I can do it, so there, you catty lot. Not that there are many cats left mind you."

DYNAMITE DAN II (Mirrorsoft)

Matthew Lloyd sent in these DD II tips at the last moment.

As soon as you land and have gone down the ladder from the airship, pause. Look at the screen and assess the type of ground (pipes, mud, rocks, etc), also look for the exits (or look at the map if it turns up). Being hypnotised is a big problem as it may mean death by drowning. The way to combat it is simply to wear the goggles. Secret passages can be useful but on the whole they are not required. There is usually another way, through doors, or over obstacles (usually water), but to use the doors you will need bombs. To get the airship going you have to collect fuel, but be careful when collecting it as there are usually several nasties waiting to take it from you. Eat all food when found, as while the "food tune" is playing you cannot be harmed by the nasties. Collect all objects, as you never know when they will be useful. Try and keep your energy as high as possible as the less energy you have the lower your jumping power will be.

A quick tip from The 'A' Team again (double groan-n-n) is the colour of the object relates to the nastie which takes the object away from you, for example a purple clock will take the purple fuel can.

GAUNTLET (US Gold)

Some tips for GAUNTLET this time, is there no end to **Matthew Lloyd**'s talents?

It is usually best to select a two player game even when only one play is playing. The best combination seems to be Thor and Merlin (Magic and Might). Thor should lead as Merlin is no good in combat. Allow Merlin to have all the general potions, and the armour and hand to hand potions. Food and treasure should be divided equally between the two players, the player with the least strength having the first look in on the food.

HIJACK (Electric Dreams)

Finally from **Matthew** are a few tiplets for HIJACK.

If you have no use for anyone, send them to their office.

The President must be Charlie Brown, because he's wishy washy and won't make any decisions.

Search everything every time!

Always read the paper on your desk.

BEACH HEAD II (US Gold)

Paul Duffy of **Greenhills, Glasgow**, has sent in this small but useful cheat for BEACH HEAD II that should amass your mega scores. It is useful to know that after ten million points the score wraps back to zero, so be careful when scoring.

On level one, when your men are at the bottom wall, move one of them into a position where they can bomb the gun. Move the man a little to the left or right of the gun to a place where it cannot be shot and bomb away.

A quick tiplet from the 'A' Team (AMTIX! - Team) (TACKY!! Richard), on the screen where the tanks run back and forth there is a place about 3 centimetres from the left of the screen which, when shot, will give you thousands of points, and what is more your men will not get killed!

BIGGLES
(Mirrorsoft)

Ah! some POKEs to get your mits round. These come from **P Robson** in **Middlesborough, Cleveland**. Thanks old chap.

```
10 REM * COPYRIGHT and that means you B*B W*D*!
20 REM P Robson 1987
30 MEMORY &37ff:MODE 1:LOAD "!"
40 FOR A=&B108 TO &B13D
50 READ b$:b=VAL("&"+B$)
60 POKE A,B:C=C+B
70 NEXT A
80 IF C=&169C THEN CALL &B108
90 PRINT "ERROR IN DATA - WHAT HO!":STOP
100 DATA 21,b1,11,22,e9,46,c3,05,40,cd
110 DATA 0e,bc,21,2b,b1,22,c3,ad,3e,c3
120 DATA 32,c2,ad,21,c9,ad,11,b2,ac,01
130 DATA 17,00,ed,b0,c9,01,00,f6,ed,49
140 DATA 3e,c9,32,9b,3e,3e,00,32,7a,5a
150 DATA 32,35,61,c9
```

DRAGON'S LAIR
(Software Projects)

I promised you all that I would be printing DRAGON'S LAIR POKEs in this issue, and, true to my word, here they are. The POKEy bit comes from Software Projects themselves, and gives you infinite Dirks on the DISK version of the game. The second program is my own little concoction and allows you to start on any level. Once the program is typed in you need only run it and a menu will come up asking which level you wish to start on. Make sure that you type it right or there will be very little you can do after. The POKE should be typed in and saved to the D.L. disk under the name CHEAT. To get it going simply RUN "CHEAT". My program has a little more to it and needs to be initialised first so type in the first program and run it, but do not save it to disk. RESET the machine and type in the second program, save this one to the D.L. disk with the name "LEVEL" then reset the machine again. The program makes permanent changes to the disk, so once they are made you need only run "CHEAT" to start the game on any level with infinite lives. To get the disk back to normal simply choose the giddy goons as the level to start on.

FIRST THE CHEAT PROGRAM

```
10 OPENOUT D :MEMORY &2FF:CLOSEOUT
20 LOAD "DL.BIN",&300: POKE &25A7,&B7
30 FOR N=&19F1 TO &1A09: READ P$: POKE N,VAL("&"+P$): NEXT N: CALL &2517
40 DATA 3A, A, 1A, 4F, 3A, B, 1A, B1, 4F, E6, 1F, 87, 85, 6F, 8C, 95, 67, 7E, 23, 66, 6F, 79, 0, 0, C9
```

ALIENS
(Electric Dreams)

Mr (I couldn't quite read the first name) **Price** from Bramley in Leeds has sent in the full solution to Electric Dreams' blockbuster ALIENS. But don't expect it to be too easy now you know the way through.

First, KEEP HICKS ALIVE OR ELSE. To complete the game Hicks must return to the start when the Queen has been killed.

Directions for the Queen's chamber: 3 east to room 4, 2 north, east, 2 north and 3 east to 17. north, 2 east, 2 south, west, 3 south to the armoury. Leave Burke here so he can keep it clear of bio-mechanical growth. Move the rest of the team back to room 19. Then move 3 east, 2 south, east and 2 south to 36. Carry on east until you reach room 75, then go south twice and east once to 144. From here go south, east 4, north, east and 2 north to room 81. Then go east 7 times and 2 North to room 189.



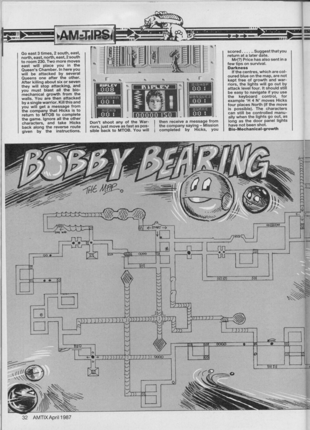
Go east 3 times, 2 south, east, north, east, north, east, 2 south to room 230. Two more moves east will place you in the Queen's Chamber. In here you will be attacked by several Queens one after the other. After killing about six or seven they will stop attacking, and you must blast all the bio-mechanical growth from the walls. You are then attacked by a single warrior. Kill this and you will get a message from the company that Hicks is to return to MTOB to complete the game. Ignore all the other characters, and take Hicks back along the reverse route given by the instructions. Don't shoot any of the Warriors, just move as fast as possible back to MTOB. You will then receive a message from the company saying – Mission completed by Hicks, you scored . . . . . . Suggest that you return at a later date.

Mr(?) Price has also sent in a few tips on survival.

Darkness

If the centres, which are coloured blue on the map, are not kept free of growth and warriors, the lights will go out by attack level four. It should still be easy to navigate if you use the keyboard control, for example 'H 4 N' moves Hicks four places North (if the move is possible). The characters can still be controlled manually when the lights go out, as long as the door panel lights have not been shot.

Bio-Mechanical-growth



Although it says that this causes darkness to descend, it is usually best not to shoot it as it wastes ammo.

Warriors, Queens and Face-Huggers

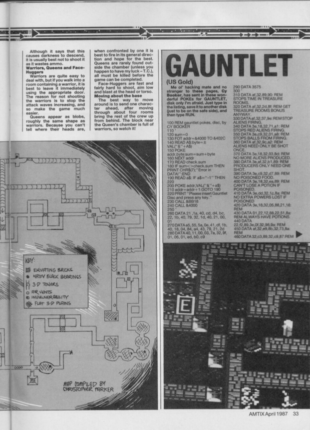
Warriors are quite easy to deal with, but if you walk into a room containing a warrior, it is best to leave it immediately using the appropriate door. The reason for not shooting the warriors is to stop the attack waves increasing, and so make the game much easier.

Queens appear as blobs, roughly the same shape as warriors. Because you can't tell where their heads are, when confronted by one it is best to fire in its general direction and hope for the best. Queens are rarely found outside the chamber (unless you happen to have my luck – T.C.), all must be killed before the game can be completed.

Face-Huggers are fast and fairly hard to shoot, aim low and blast at the head or torso.

Moving about the base

The best way to move around is to send one character ahead, after moving through about four rooms bring the rest of the crew up from behind. The block near the Queen's chamber is full of warriors, so watch it!



GAUNTLET

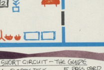
(US Gold)

Me ol' hacking mate and no stranger to these pages, **Cy Booker**, has sent in these wonderful **POKEs for GAUNTLET**, disk only I'm afraid. Just type in the listing, save it to another disk (just to be on the safe side), and then type **RUN**.

```
100 REM gauntlet pokes, disc, by
CY BOOKER
110 '
120 sum=0
130 FOT addr=&4000 TO &402C
140 READ A$:byte=±
VAL("&"+A$)
150 POKE
addr,byte:sum=sum+byte
160 NEXT addr
170 READ check.sum
180 IF sum<>check.sum THEN
PRINT CHR$(7);"Error in
DATA!":END
190 READ a$: IF a$="-1" THEN
220
200 POKE addr,VAL("&"+a$)
210 addr=addr+1:GOTO 190
220 PRINT "Please insert Gauntlet
Disc and press any key."
230 CALL &BB18
240 CALL &4000
250 '
260 DATA 21 ,1a, 40, cd, d4, bc,
22, 1b, 40, 79, 32, 1d, 40, 21, 00,
01
270 DATA e5, 55, 5a, 0e, 41, df, 1b,
40, 18, 04, 84, a4, 43, 79, 21, 2d
280 DATA 40, 11, 00, 03, 7a, 32, 9f,
01, 06, 01, ed, b0, c9
290 DATA 3575
300 '
310 DATA af,32,89,90: REM
STOPS TIME IN TREASURE
ROOMS.
320 DATA af,32,2d,8f: REM GET
TREASURE ROOMS BONUS
ANYWAY.
330 DATA af,32,37,9e: REM STOP
ALIENS FIRING.
340 DATA 3e,18,32,71,a1: REM
STOPS RED ALIENS FIRING.
350 DATA 3e,c9,32,01,a8: REM
STOPS BALLS FROM FIRING.
360 DATA af,32,9c,a2: REM
ALIENS NEED ONLY BE SHOT
ONCE.
370 DATA 3e,18,32,03,8d: REM
NO MORE ALIENS PRODUCED.
380 DATA 3e,af,32,b1,89: REM
PRODUCERS ONLY NEED ONE
SHOT.
390 DATA 3e,c9,32,d7,89: REM
NO POISONED FOOD.
400 DATA 3e,18,32,ea,89: REM
CAN'T LOSE A POTION IF
POISONED.
410 DATA 3e,dd,32,1c,8a: REM
NO EXTRA POWERS LOST IF
POISONED
420 DATA 3e,18,32,05,88,21,18:
REM
430 DATA 01,22,12,88,22,51,8a:
REM ALWAYS HAVE POTIONS.
440 DATA
22,f2,89,3e,0f,32,98,9a: REM
450 DATA af,32,e9,8b,32,73,8a:
REM
460 DATA 32,c3,89,32,c9,87:REM
```

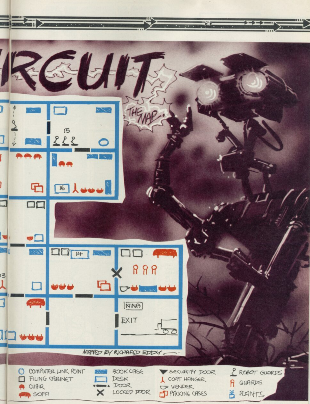
SHORT CI

START



SHORT CIRCUIT – THE GUIDE

1 FLOPPY DISK
2 KEY RING
3 SCREWDRIVER
4 REMOTE CONTROL
5. PASS CARD
6. JUMP ACTIVATOR
7 WALLET
8 NOTE BOOK
9. INSECT
10. GREEN DRAGON BOOK
11. NEWSPAPER
12. MAGAZINE
13. DOOR KEY
14. BUNCH OF KEYS
15. LASER HARDWARE
16. PASS WORD


RCUIT
THE MAP
15
16
14
13
NINA
EXIT
MAPPED BY RICHARD EDDY
COMPUTER LINK POINT
FILING CABINET
CHAIR
SOFA
BOOK CASE
DESK
DOOR
LOCKED DOOR
SECURITY DOOR
COAT HANGER
VENDER
PACKING CASES
ROBOT GUARDS
GUARDS
PLANTS

```
ALWAYS HAVE KEYS.
470 DATA 3e,**,32,eb,99: REM
AMOUNT HEALTH DECREASES
WITH TIME.
480 DATA af,32,f7,9a: REM GET
9999 IF PICK UP ENERGY.
490 DATA 3e,01,32,93,98: REM
CHANGE TIME BEFORE DOORS
DISAPPEAR.
500 DATA 3e,01,32,68,98: REM
CHANGE TIME BEFORE EXITS
APPEAR.
510 DATA '
520 DATA c3,00,84,-1
530 '
```

By changing the value marked with **, it is possible to increase or decrease the amount by which the health points reduce with time. Setting it to 0 stops the decrease. The range of values is 0-99.

The 01 in line 490 and 500 where 17 and 8c respectively. To turn the pokes off simply put these values back.

CY BOOKER is not only a master hacker, but also a great bug hunter. This poke will get rid of the high score table bug which plagues the disk version.

```
100 REM Gauntlet, high score bug
eradicator.
110 '
120 MEMORY &3FFF
130 FOT addr=&4200 TO &423A
140 READ A$:byte=±
VAL("&"+A$)
150 POKE
addr,byte:sum=sum+byte
160 NEXT addr
170 READ check.sum
180 IF sum<>check.sum THEN
PRINT CHR$(7);"Error in
DATA!":END
190 PRINT CHR$(12);"Please
place GAUNTLET disc in drive and
press any key"
200 IF INKEY$="" THEN 200
210 CALL &4200
220 IF PEEK(&41D9)=&AF THEN
PRINT "Maximum score is
999,999" ELSE PRINT "SCORES
AS NORMAL"
230 END

250 DATA
21,36,42,cd,d4,bc,22,38,42,79,3
2,3a,42,21,37,42
260 DATA
cd,d4,bc,22,3b,42,79,32,3b,42,2
1,00,40,11,00,1c
270 DATA
0e,13,c5,d5,e5,d5,38,42,21,d9,4
1,7e,ee,18,77,e1
280 DATA
d1,c1,df,3b,42,c9,84,85,a4,43,79
290 DATA 6199
```

To restore the disk to normal, simply run the program a second time. Although the program is checksumed, it may still be possible for errors to slip into either of the two programs listed. It would be a good idea to check through them several times,as they modify the disk.

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS (Elite)

A lot of people have been complaining that I have not printed a G&G poke. I did print it ages ago, but it contained one mistake, which wasn't even crucial. The part that says **REM CHANGE G FOR ANY NUMBER . . .** can be left out so that line 60 reads only **LIVES**=255. Also a little message for those who said our poke was copied from another mag. **I DID THE POKE FIRST, ON MY TODD, USING MY M/CODE MONITOR, IN MY HOUSE, ON MY MACHINE.** I do hope you have got the message MR X. Here's the POKE again, just for the record.

```
5 REM (c) 1986 A.S. CLARKE.
10 OPENOUT "D"
20 MEMORY &12FF:MODE 1
30 LOAD"!CODE",&1800
40 REM FAST GAME POKE
50 FOR F=&57F5 TO &57F8:POKE F,0:NEXT F
60 LIVES=255'REM CHANGE FOR ANY NUMBER 1-255, 0 IS SILLY
70 POKE &50A8, LIVES
80 REM INFINITE LIVES
90 PRINT"INFINITE LIVES (Y/N)"
100 A$=UPPER$(INKEY$):IF A$<>"Y" AND A$<>"N" THEN 100
110 IF A$="Y" THEN POKE &509B,0:POKE &509C,0:POKE &509D,0
120 REM START ON ANY LEVEL
130 INPUT "LEVEL TO START ON (1-3)";A
140 IF A<1 OR A> THEN 130
150 IF A=1 THEN 180
160 POKE &50AC,A-2
170 POKE &50B0,A-1
180 PRINT"MEGA ARMOUR MODE (Y/N)"
190 A$=UPPER$(INKEY$):IF A$<>"Y" AND A$<>"N" THEN 190
200 IF A$="Y" THEN POKE &823A,1
210 CALL &5000
```

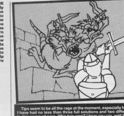
DRAGON'S LAIR REVISITED

Whoops, the program that was meant to go here and give you access to all those lovely levels on DRAGON'S LAIR has a slight problem. It doesn't work properly at the moment, but I will outline the process for getting to any level so that you can do it for yourselves. Don't blame me if you create havoc with your disk.

First get out your CP/M disk and boot it up. Now using whatever file your particular version of CP/M needs, set all the file to DIR and R/W. Rename the Giddy goons level, the one with the name "DRLGIDDY.BIN", to "DRLGIDDY.2". Now rename the level that you wish to start on as "DRLGIDDY.BIN". To return the disk to normal, rename the file that is now "DRLGIDDY.BIN" back to its original name and rename "DRLGIDDY.2" back to "DRLGIDDY.BIN". To help you out, the level names are as follows.


DRLGIDDY.BIN The Giddy Goons.
DRLTENT.BIN The Tenticle Room.
DRLSLAY.BIN The Dragon's Lair.
DRLCHECK.BIN The Checker Board.
DRLSKULL.BIN" The Skull Hallway.
DRLROPES.BIN" The Burning Ropes.
DRLDISC.BIN" The Falling Disk.
DRLWEAP.BIN" The Weapons Room.

If you were wondering where the second falling disk file is, then the simple answer is it is the same as the first falling disk with a different colour scheme and slightly different gameplay. The second falling disk is triggered as long as it comes after the Checker Board.



Tips seem to be all the rage at the moment, especially for ALIENS. I have had no less than three full solutions and two different maps to this game of gore. Who has won? I hear you cry, well two people actually. The prizes this month go out to Cy Booker, who has proved his salt by fixing GAUNTLET, and Matthew Lloyd, who still has our copy of ALIENS. Thanks to them both, and anyone else who sent in tips and pokes over the last few months.

News

THE MILLION POUND MARRIAGE . . .

One of the most successful budget games companies have decided to expand their empire by purchasing **Melbourne House Publishers** for an undisclosed seven figure sum.

Mastertronic director, Alan Sharam, said the company have been looking to buy a full price software company for some time and he claimed his company was "very pleased to have come to this agreement".

The two directors and principal shareholders of **Melbourne House**, Alfred Milgrom and Naomi Besen, also have shares in a software development company and a software distribution company, both based down under in Australia. Milgrom said they intended to remain very much involved with the software industry and with **Melbourne House Publishers**.

He also claimed the deal would allow them to continue their expansion in Australia and to expand their licensing possibilities in America and Japan.

Melbourne House Publishers have some 14 full price titles planned this year, many of which are being developed by UK authors under the guidance of Editorial Manager, Rachel Davies.

Frank Harman, another director of **Mastertronic**, said they were impressed with the product development plans they had seen.

. . . BUT AN ABOUT TURN ON GADGET AND FIST II?

The recent take over of **Melbourne House** by **Mastertronic** has already produced some surprise moves. The former have now decided not to bring out either *Inspector Gadget* or *Fist II* for the Amstrad machines. No reasons for the decision has been given but it is believed the conversions to the Arnold are not good enough.

STAR GAMES FROM GREMLIN

Gremlin Graphics Software Limited have reveiled which of their games will be on the first *Star Games* compilation. The four games are *The Way of the Tiger* from **Gremlin**, *Beach Head II* from **US Gold**, *Barry McGuigan's Boxing* and *Rescue on Fractalus*, both from **Activision**.

The compilation should be a big seller for it costs just £9.95 on cassette and £14.99 on disk.

DOMARK GET STAR WARS!

Domark have secured the rights to produce the computer game of the *Star Wars* coin operated arcade games. **Atari Inc** have granted **Domark** rights to produce *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *and Return of the Jedi* games. They are scheduled for release towards the end of the year.

GREMLIN KRAKOUT

Gremlin Graphics invite you to the ultimate challenge! They dare you to try out their latest game *Krakout*. Once you play the first screen you will be hooked, or so the company claim. Aliens masquerade in the background, desperate for liberation. Once you have cleared a path there's no stopping them. They may choose to freeze your bat, introduce a second bogus ball, turn bricks into bombs, and that's if you are lucky!

The beauty of *Krakout* is the degree of control you have over the pace at which you play the game, effectively providing you with almost infinite levels of gameplay. The game should be in your local shop any day now and costs £9.99.

MICRONET SPONSORS BIKE MARATHON

One of the riders taking part in a marathon bicycle ride is being sponsored by **Micronet**. Aidan Prior, aged 23, is a member of the team taking the Oriental route of the marathon, the aim of which is to raise funds for the charity, **Intermediate Technology**, which in turn aims to provide funds for long term development in the Third World.

Coverage of the event has already begun on **Micronet** with Aidan taking part in a celebrity chatline before he departed. Members will be kept informed of his progress with personal monthly bulletins from him. He will report on the weather, food, publicity and his progress in countries through which he cycles.

Aidan and his colleagues started their ride in Hong Kong. They will cross the Peoples Republic of China, continuing to Japan, Moscow, Finland and Sweden, going to the Arctic Circle then down through Denmark and Germany before arriving in Amsterdam some 13,000 kilometres later. The seven month marathon will culminate with all four teams coming together to complete the last leg, from Amsterdam to London.

MEET NEMESIS THE WARLOCK

Readers of the cult comic, 2000 AD, will be interested to know **Martech** has acquired the computer rights for the character, Nemesis the Warlock, who is the leader of the resistance movement against Torquemada, Grand Master of the Terminators.

In the game, *Nemesis the Warlock*, you are Nemesis and you seek out Torquemada in an attempt to finally destroy him. Each new screen will provide him with different obstacles to overcome. The Terminators will try to destroy him before he can reach their Grand Master. Sounds very interesting.



MARTECH IS PULSATING

Martech have announced the release of *Pulsator*, a multi-maze shoot 'em up,with a challenging puzzle. The game offers five game levels, each consisting of 49 rooms. On each level is a 'Pulsy' who has to be rescued and this is achieved by finding the key which unlocks the door to the prison.

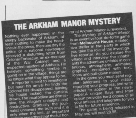
The aliens on each level become progressively more intelligent and will deplete your power if they touch you. The landscape of each level also becomes increasingly more difficult and hazardous to negotiate. The game is far more complex than simply finding your way through a maze. Various pathways are blocked by gates, of which there are six types. The gates can be opened or closed by passing over sensors.

The game will cost £8.95 for the cassette version and an extra £6 if you want the disk game.

GALLERY ERROR

In last month's **Rainbird** Art Gallery we attributed the picture of a dragon and a castle to Tate. In fact this was an entry by **Mark Jones** of Poole in Dorset. Sorry for the boob Mark!





THE ARKHAM MANOR MYSTERY

Nothing ever happened in the sleepy backwater of Arkham, at least nothing to make the headlines in the press, then one day the editor of a national newspaper received a disturbing letter from Colonel Fortescue, an ex-member of the War Cabinet and a respected resident of Arkham. He believes something terrible is going on in the village, things are no longer what they appear to be.

A reporter is sent to investigate but upon his arrival he finds the Colonel has disappeared, leaving his house locked, the curtains drawn. The local police are dismissive, the villagers unhelpful and obstructive. Gradually the journalist uncovers the truth and it is only when the last, all important detail is unearthed that the full horror of Arkham Manor is revealed.

The Mystery of Arkham Manor is an inventive tour-de-force game from **Melbourne House**, a detective thriller in two parts in which you take the role of the investigative reporter. As you explore the village and interview the inhabitants the adventure unfolds in continuous, atmospheric, animated graphics, combined with text, icons and pull-down menus.

In the game you must send regular telegrams to your editor, reporting your progress, and write articles to appear in the newspaper. A unique Save and Print option provides hard copies of all your articles and telegrams for you to file for future reference.

The game is being released in May and will cost £8.95.

PRICE CUTS AND NEW GAMES

Bubble Bus Software have released two more Amstrad games in their "Mini-Bus Line" range. The games are *Classic Muncher* and *Hi Rise*.

In a move to tidy up their "Mini-Bus Line" range the company have decided to reduce all £2.99 games to £1.99 to make the complete range available at two prices, £1.99 on cassette and £9.95 on disk.

PAT ON BACK FOR DURELL

The drop in the price of 3 inch disks for the Amstrad has brought some good news from software company, **Durell**. They have brought out disk versions of all their Amstrad games at the low price of £11.95 but if you buy direct from the company you can save another £2. Just think the disk version of *Thanatos* for just £9.95! Their address is Castle Lodge, Castle Green, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4AB.

FULL STEAM AHEAD FOR THE PCW

Two of **Hewson**'s most popular games, *Southern Belle* and *Heathrow Air Traffic Control*, will soon be available for the PCW machine.

The two games are being released on one disk for £16.95. *Southern Belle* is based on a 1930's King Arthur Class Locomotive on the London to Brighton run. *Heathrow Air Traffic Control* is self explanatory and has seven levels of play including 'basic vectoring with slow traffic' and 'Emergency traffic'. An additional demonstration exercise means players can get an appreciation of *Heathrow Air Traffic Control* before taking over the simulator.

"HELLO SAILOR!"

"A life on the ocean wave, oh a life on the ocean wave . . . ". Jane Chalmers, **Activision** superminion, has been singing down the phone recently and shouting peculiarities such as: 'Pull the sheet, mind me boom, new game off the port bow . . . ". Why? Well, **Activision** are releasing a strategy simulation based around the yuppie sport of sailing and it's called *Sailing*. What an imaginative lot. It based around the America's Cup race and as a sailor you've got to start from scratch and build your own boat. With hazards such as wind and high water things aren't going to be simple. It'll set you back £9.99 on cassette and £14.99 on disk – life jackets at the ready boys!

SEARCH FOR SOFTWARE WRITERS

Who wants to be a millionaire? Don't all scream at once for the chance of becoming one is still remote to say the least. However, if you are an expert on the Amstrad you could take your first step to this dizzy goal by contacting **Microprose Software Limited**.

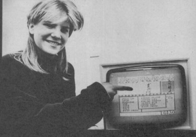
The man who is looking for Amstrad software writers is Simon Barnard, the company's software development manager. He believes the United Kingdom has the best Amstrad software writers and we want them. His job is to find them and offer them not only money but also international recognition. Anyone interested can contact Simon at the company's offices. The address is 2 Market Place, Tetbury, Gloucestershire GL8 8DA. The telephone number is 0666-54326.

FRANK GOES POACHING

It appears **Mastertronic** director, Frank Herman, has been doing a spot of poaching. He has persuaded the vice president of **Namco-America**, Justin Webber, to head his company's new arcade games division, **Arcadia Systems Inc** in Silicon Valley, America.

In addition to his extensive involvement in the international 'coin op' market Mr Heber's responsibilities at **Namco-America** also included the licensing of many prominent arcade games, developed by **Namco** and its subsidiary company, **Atari Games Corporation**, including *Pac Man*, *Paperboy*, and *Gauntlet*.

MEETING A GRANGE HILL WITCH



It's not every day one manages to meet a witch in a good mood but that's exactly what our very own editor, Malcolm Harding, did when he recently attended the press launch of the latest game from **Argus Press Software**. Called *Grange Hill – The Computer Game*, it is based on the popular BBC television programme and features the adventures of Luke 'Gonch' Gardner and Paul 'Hollo' Holloway. It costs £9.95 on cassette.

Argus held the launch at their Leicester Place headquarters in London and the special guest of honour was Fleur Taylor who is better known as Imelda Davis, one of the *Grange Hill* witches.

Fleur might have a nasty image on the small screen, but she is the complete opposite in real life, and enjoys playing games on her Spectrum (should have been an Amstrad). She is pictured looking at her screen self in the game.

AMTIX! USER CLUB NEWS

By Malcolm Harding

Welcome again to the pages that refresh more parts of user clubs than any page in any other Amstrad magazine. Sadly this is the last issue of AMTIX! in its present form and it follows this is the last User Club feature. I hope these pages have been informative and helpful. I have made a lot of friends through them. If any of you want to keep in touch, or if I can help in any way, my home address is 41 Balmoral Crescent, Oswestry, Shropshire SY11 2XQ. In any event take care. One day we might meet again!

DIMENSION DESIGNS USER CLUB

The final user club to be mentioned in my columns has been started by D Eland of 41 Whiphill Lane, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN3 3JP. Mr Eland, who is editor of the Dimension Designs User Club, wants to hear from any readers living in his area, or elsewhere, interested in joining.

NOW FOR THE SHAUG MAGAZINE?

I have recently received a copy of a magazine from the **South Humberside Amstrad User Group** or **SHAUG** for short. It is edited by **Steve Brokenshire** of 22 Beechwood Crescent, Broughton, Brigg, South Humberside DN20 0SB.

The magazine reviews software games, has a letters section, and gives advice about transferring tape games to disk.

HELLO TO AMSTACT

Two youngsters from Sheffield have put their heads together to produce a magazine called **AMSTACT**. Mark Tyson and Peter White intend to run it as a user club magazine. The magazine will cost 75p plus postage per issue. Once they become established and attract some advertising they hope to be able to reduce the cover price. Anyone interested can contact them at **5 Nottingham Close, South Anston, Sheffield S31 7BP**.

NEWS FROM SOUTHAMPTON

Finally, some news about the **Southampton Micro Users Group**, which has been established for micro users, including those with an Amstrad. The contact is **Ian Campbell** of 14 Hobart Drive, Hythe, Southampton, Hants, and anyone living in the area, who wants further information, should contact him by post. A SAE would be appreciated.

LINK SOFTWEAR USERS

It's always nice to receive a letter of praise for the User Club pages and the latest one has come from Jon Tyler of Thornton Heath, Surrey. He started his own user group as a direct result of reading my pages. It is called Link Softwear Users, is for CPC owners only, and the address is 26 Kensington Avenue, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 8BY. Good luck Jon!

PEN PALS WANTED

More and more readers want pen pals who are computer minded, including the following:-

Sascha Grebe, aged 16, of Am Stein 10, 5419 Raubach, West Germany, owns a CPC464, thinks AMTIX! is the greatest, and want to swop software, tips and pokes.

Michael Aldridge, aged 16, of 105 Catherton, Stirchley, Telford, Shropshire TF3 1YX, owns a CPC464 and wants to hear from anyone anywhere.

Christine Potter of AM Rottbrink 28, D4952 Porta Westfalica, West Germany, owns a CPC6128 and wants to hear from anyone, male or female, who is interested in exchanging tips, and information or swopping software.

Stephen Trott of 24 Giesbach Road, London N19 3EH, wants to hear from anyone.

Kenny Moorhead, aged 14, of 101 Kentmere Avenue, Seacroft, Leeds LS14 1BP, owns a CPC464 and wants to hear from girls and boys anywhere! He is interested in other people's opinions on games, and new items of software. He says he has "lots of games".

Robert Lamb of 82 Finkle Street, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 4AZ, admits to being slightly older than most Amsters and would like to hear from people aged 40 or over who have a CPC464.

Niall Murphy, of 259 Navan Road, Dublin 7, Eire, wants to hear from anyone who owns a CPC machine. He is interested in games, adventures, in fact anything. His telephone number is Dublin 382389.

Vignir Mar Haraldsson, aged 17, owns a CPC664 with a 64K memory expansion and an AMX Mouse. He lives at Kirkjubraut 27, 260 Njarovik, Iceland, and is interested in programming, playing and collecting games.

David Cavalier, aged 15, of 8 Orpheus House, New Orleans Walk, London N19 35X, owns a CPC464 with disk drive, wants to hear from anyone who would like to swop games, ideas or pokes.

Ranjit Singh, aged 16, of 59B Chevening Road, Queen's Park, London NW6 6DB, owns a CPC464 with disk drive, and is interested in machine code programming, games and graphics. He would like to hear from anyone.

Paul Duffy, aged 14, of 135 Juniper Avenue, Greenhills, East Kilbride, Glasgow G75 9JS, owns a CPC464 and is interested in arcade adventures and swopping tips, and ideas.

Jonathan Cale of 64 Velwell Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 4LD, forgot to state his age but he wants to hear from lots of fellow Amsters.

Christina Smith, aged 14, of Erw Lon, New Road, Goodwick, Dyfed SA64 0AD, wants to hear from anyone, aged between 13 and 16, who is interested in swopping games or maps.

Andrea McKee, aged 19, of 4 Stockton Road, Durham City DH1 3DX, wants to hear from Amstrad owners in England or abroad.

Tony Gooding, aged 15, of 44 Woodland Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 8JT, owns a CPC464 and is interested in swopping games, utilities, tips and pokes.

M Keryk of 10 Philip Street, Darwen, Lancashire BB3 2DJ, owns a CPC464 with disk drive, is 29 years old and wants to hear from anyone at home or abroad.

Robert Weir, aged 15, of 87 Burnside Road, Gorebridge, Midlothian EH23 4ET, owns a CPC464 and wants to hear from lots of people.

Roy Taylor, of 12 Selwyn Close, Lee Street, Oldham, Lancashire OL8 1HA, owns a CPC464 with a green screen and Multi Face Two, and would like to swop software, information, and pokes.

David Piddes of 11 Curlew Court, Normie,', Herts EN10 6JW, owns a CPC6128 and is mad on games, especially good adventures. He would like to swap hints, tips and software with Amstrad owners anywhere.

Ricardo Sueiras, aged 16, of 2 Solent Close, Lymington, Hants, SO41 9ST, would like to hear from fairly experienced Laser Basic users with a view to exchanging programming tips and programs. He would also like to swop software and tips for games.

Giorgio Veazey of 17 Cliff Park Close, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN9 8TR, is 22 years old, and owns a CPC464. He wants to hear from lots of people, age unimportant. He has about 50 games to swap.

Nick Wareham, of 33 Whitelands Avenue, Chorleywood, Herts WD3 5RE, owns a CPC6128 and wants to swap disk software, tips and ideas.

Brother and sister, **Andre and Stephanie Buttigier**, who are 14 years and 16 years old respectively, live at Stonehaven, Ugga Street, Ta' L-Ibragg, St Andrew's, Malta. They want to hear from boys and girls of their age group. They own a CPC464 and want to swap software and tips and pokes.

Neil Jones, aged 16, of 62 High Grove, Sea Mills, Bristol BS9 2NP, owns a CPC464 and wants to hear from fellow 464 owners aged between 15 and 18. He is interested in swapping tape software and basic programming.

Jensen A. of 7A Lovat Close, Neasden, London NW2 7RU, wants to hear from anyone who owns an Amstrad and lives in the Brent area. He is 16 years old and interested in anything to do with the micros.

Simon Gregson, aged 19, of 12 Byass Avenue, Bridlington, East Yorkshire YO16 5JG, owns a 6128 and wants to hear from any Amstrad owner, CPC or PCW, who is interested in swapping software and exchanging tips. He is interested in utilities and programming languages.

Martin Fagan, aged 15, of 10 Woodford Avenue, Monastery Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Eire, owns a CPC464. He is interested in all kinds of games, and would like to hear from anyone interested in swapping games, pokes, playing tips and general information.

David Piddes of 11 Curlew Court, Wormley, Herts EN10 6JW, owns a 6128 and would like to swap games, pokes and tips.

Bradley Joy, aged 14, of 11 Grangeway, Smallfield, Horley, Surrey, RH6 9LZ, owns a CPC464 with disk drive, and is interested in both adventures and arcade games. He also wants to swap software, hints and tips with anyone aged between 13 and 15.

Mark Spencer aged 18, of 8 Standish Close, Sheffield S5 8XR, owns a 6128 and would like to hear from any hackers, from novice to expert, to swap hints and tips.

David McKeever of Hillhead, Tarbolton, Mauchline, Ayrshire, Scotland, wants to hear from anyone with a Disc Wizard and owns a CPC6128.

Tony Gibbons of 136 Cameron Estate, Raheny, Dublin 5, Eire, who wants to hear from anyone anywhere. His interests are arcade games and programming in basic.

Chris Burton, aged 15, of Caretakers House, Whitstable C J School, Oxford Street, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1DO, would like to hear from anyone aged between 14 years and 17 years. He owns a CPC464 and has about 50 games.

Jason Stanway, aged 16, of 26 Newpool Road, Knypersley, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent ST8 6NS, would like to swap software, hints, tips and general information on the Amstrad with anyone.

Colin Naylor, aged 15, of Priory Club Flat, 410 Marton Road, Middlesborough TS4 2PQ, owns a CPC464 with green screen and has loads of software. He wants to hear from any girls aged between 14 and 18 living in the United Kingdom. He would also like to hear from any user club in Middlesborough.

Simon Field, aged 14, of 7 Rosafield Avenue, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9BU, would like to hear from other CPC6128 owners who are interested in swapping tape or disk games and ideas. He also wants to know if there is a user club in Birmingham.

Michael Mellin, aged 14, of 4 Camden Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 0BL, owns an Amstrad CPC464 and would like to hear from any boy or girl.

Peter Cheong, aged 15, of Apartment BLK 252, Ang Mo K10, Avenue 4, 03-211, Singapore 2056, is interested in programming, swapping games, and solving adventure problems. He likes both adventure and arcade games and would like to hear from anyone anywhere!

Jon Tyler, aged 16, of 26 Kensington Avenue, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 8BY, is interested in swapping tape games. He wants to hear from any CPC464 owners who are prepared to swap information and ideas.

Ashley Cotter-Cairns, aged 16, of 1 Langley Hill Close, Kings Langley, Herts WD4 9HB, wants to hear from other Amstrad owners interested in swapping such things as lists, tips and pokes.

Hayden Mallen, aged 13, owns a CPC464, and lives at 80 Richmond Drive, Perton, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 7RP. He wants to hear from girls or boys aged 13 to 14.

Alfred Hughes, aged 18, of 21 Guisborough Road, Thornaby, Cleveland TS17 8EE, wants to hear from other owners of CPC464 machines.

William Freeland, aged 16, of 15 John Humble Street, Mayfield, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 5QZ, would like a French pen pal who can write English.

Paul Boyall, aged 16, of 12 Main Road, Hundleby, Spilsby, Lincs PE23 5LS, would like to hear from boys or girls of his age who own an Amstrad.

Eamon Murray, aged 16, of 169 Cappaghmore, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Eire, owns a CPC464 is interested in all software. He would like to swap software, information, pokes etc.

Simon Martinez of 2 Vronhill Close, Off Fernhill Drive, Liverpool L8 8LB, also owns a 464 micro. He likes adventures and arcade games and is interested in helping others with tips and pokes, and also receiving same.

Jonathan Boyd, aged 14, of 18 Rydal Street, Frizington, Cumbria CA26 3PY, is 14 years old and owns a CPC6128. He would like to hear from anyone.

Robert Shepherd lives at 4 Trusthorpe Road, Sutton-on-Sea, Lincs LN12 2LT, would like to hear from anyone – from punks to Prime Ministers!

AMTIX! USER CLUB NEWS

The User Club directory continues to grow at an alarming rate, thanks mainly to my friends Clint and Lesley at the Amstrad Group Federation who keep sending me listings which they have acquired. Right – here we go with the latest listing.

AUSAMSNET, DONALD LEITH, 534 Albion Street, West Brunswick, Victoria 3055, Australia.

AMSTRAD CANTERBURY, MS CHRISTINE LINFOOT, PO Box 23.079 Templeton, Christchurch, New Zealand.

SOUTHSIDE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, MS DEBBIE HOFFMAN PO Box 324, Bosnells 6110, Western Australia.

SINGAPORE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, EDDIE GOH CHENG, B1K 216 Jurong, East Street, 21 04-523, SINGAPORE 2260.

COMMUNITY COMPUTING, Church of Ascension, Hulme Walk, Hulme, Manchester M15 5FQ.

ORPINGTON COMPUTER CLUB, Gas Hall, Woodhurst Avenue, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent. Contact Sue Andrews on 01 652 2212.

AMSWEST AMSTRAD USER GROUP, MRS P T ARDRON, 6 Weston Street, Carlisle 6101, West Australia.

LE CLUB INFOMATIQUE, CHRISTOPHE WAROUX BRUYSLEN LE C/B, 1 Rue Laterale 62470, Calonne Ricourart, Siege Social Bruay-en-Artois, France.

PATONS COMPUTER CLUB, P PATON, 176 Todmorden Road, Burnley, Lancashire BB11 3EU.

AMSTRAD USER SOFTWARE DATABASE, SIMON PORRITT, 13 Woodbine Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 4EU.

ELLESMERE PORT AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, MR M J DYOS, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral.

WACCI, JEFF WALKER, 75 Greenfields Drive, Hillingdon, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3QN.

BMC, IAN BELL, 10 Morton Court, Blackwood, Scotland ML11 9YH.

ADVANTAGE COMPUTER USER GROUP, MR J GREEN, 33 Malyns Close, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX9 4EW.

ASSOCIATION OF COMPUTER CLUBS, MR J S BONE, Club Spot 810, c/o Claremont Place, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.

PCW USERS GROUP, MR R MOBBERLEY, 37 Clifford Bridge Road, Binley, Coventry CV3 2DW.

WEST MIDLANDS AMSTRAD USER GROUP, MR STUART WILLIAMS, 26 Matlock Road, Lower Farm Estate, Bloxwich, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 3QD.

BURNLEY CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, MR DAVE CHAMBERS, 62 Moorland Road, Rosehill, Lancashire BB11 2NX.

THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT AMSTRAD USER CLUB, MR DEREK VERNON, 1 The Middle Way, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 7E.

TAFFS WELL CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, MR A TOGHILL, 45 Moy Road, Taffs Well, South Glamorgan.

LONDON AMSTRAD USER CLUB, Harrow Computer Group, Harrow Arts Centre, 356 High Road, Harrow Weald.

CROYDON MICROCOMPUTER CLUB, MR P CHICK, Central Reference Library, Catherine Street, Croydon.

SUTTON LIBRARY COMPUTER CLUB, MR D WILKINSON, Central Library, St Nicholas Way, Sutton.

NORTH KENT AMATEUR COMPUTER CLUB, MR D PETTET, Charles Darwin School, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill.

RICHMOND COMPUTER CLUB, MR B FORSTER, Richmond Adult College, Parkshot House, Richmond.

THANET CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, MR M TEW, 21 Wellis Gardens, Westbrook, Margate, Kent CT9 5RG.

HUDDERSFIELD CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, MR D POWELL, 35 Foxroyed Drive, Mirfield, Huddersfield.

COTAC CLUB, The Secretary, MR CONRAD HART, 48 Dover Road, Room 14, Wanstead, London E12 5EA.

AMSTRAD GROUPS FEDERATION, The Secretary, MR P CLARKE 4 Sutton Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7PN. Tel 061-256-2679.

ROCKINGHAM-KWINANA AMSTRAD COMPUTER CLUB, The Secretary, MR K SAW, 29 Millgrove Avenue, Cooloongup, Western Australia WA 6168.

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PORT MACQUARIE AMSTRAD USERS GROUP, The Secretary, CRAIG TOLLIS, P O Box 584, Port Macquarie 2444, Australia.

SCHNEIDER-JOYCE-ANWENDERKREIS, Munster/Coesfeld sucht Mitglieder Contact: WOLFGANG KURCH, 4405 Nottuln Tel: 0 25 02/1540, Germany.

CPC USER CLUB - Grundung, Contact: SVEN MARTIN Obstreuberstrasse 3 3590, Bad Wildungen, Germany.

ROMSOFT CPC CLUB, MICHAEL GEORGE, Waldstrasse 13 6630 Saarlouis 5 Tel: 0 6831 6701, Germany.

AMSTRAD CLUB SCHWEIZ, Kurt In-Albon, Muhlackern CH-3931, Eggerberg, Switzerland.

FREAK-SOFT-CLUB CPC 464, RALF HOPPERDIETZEL, Theodor-Storm-Strasse 22 8670 Hof (Saale), Germany.

FREAK-SOFT-CLUB CPC 664, CPC 6128, MICHAEL ECKERT, Zobelsreuther Strasse 30 8670 (Saale), Germany.

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CPC CLUB BORKEN, KARSTEN KAMMLER, Heinrich-Hertz-Strasse 4 4280 Borken-Gemen, Germany.

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CPC USER CLUB LAATZEN, Contact: ROLF MENN, Am Kamp 29 3014 Laatzen 1, Germany.

S C C N-H-W-N-H-W SCHNEIDER COMPUTER CLUB, OLIVER THIELE, Am Kirchweg 49, 5908 Neunkirchen 5, Germany.

S C C H SCHNEIDER COMPUTER CLUB HAMBURG, ALEXANDER SCHARF Heimfelder Strasse 60, 2100 Hamburg 90, Germany.

CPC-USER-CLUB SCHWEIZ, KLAUS-DIETER PREISS, Im Hof 20 CH-8637, Laupen, Switzerland.

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CPC-USER-CLUB-VOGELSANG, PETER WIESCHER, Kasernenstrasse 9, D-5140 Erkelenz-4, Germany.

CPC 464 CLUB GRUNDUNG, Contact HEINZ ELBERS, Wurttemberger Strasse 1 4460 Nordhorn Germany.

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WESTERN SUBURBS AMSTRAD, The Secretary, MR J JAMES 36 Penong Street, Westlake, Brisbane 4074, Australia.

WEIPA AMSTRAD USERS GROUP, The Secretary, MR GARY CHIPPENDALE, 15 Noola Court, Weipa 4874, Australia.

CPC NUTZER CLUB, Contact, FRITZ-PETER, Nonnenbruch Splittenbrede 11, 4800 Bielefeld 1 Tel: 05 21 88 7970.

NORDHORN USER CLUB, Contact, FRED WEBER, Laarstrabe 23 4460 Nordhorn. Tel: 059 21 75478.

CPC CLUB MAGIC KEY, Contact, MICHAEL HOLLMAN, Stamburger Strabe 46 2800, Bremen 1.

BERLINER USER CLUB, Contact, WOLFGANG WINDORPSKI, Gritznerstrabe 38, 1000, Berlin 41 Tel: 030 822 7750.

CPC CLUB GUNDUNG, Contact, KRIES BORKEN, Dominique Weib Sudring 6, 4282 Veolen-Ramsdorf.

SCHNEIDER USER CLUB HEILBRONN, Contact, MIRKA PECORONI, Deutschherrenstabe 6, 7107 Bad Friedrichshall; Tel: 071 36 6701.

JOYCE USER CLUB NURNBERG, ANSGAR ZERFAB, Ammanstrabe 26, 8500 Nurnberg 40 Tel: 09 11 4367 78.

WEST MIDLANDS AMSTRAD USER GROUP, 26 Matlock Road, Lower Farm Estate, Bloxwich, Walsall WS3 3QD, West Midlands. Contact STUART WILLIAMS on 0922 406411.

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AMSTRAD COMPUTING NEWSLETTER, CHRISTOPHER BRYANT, 11 Havenview Road, Seaton, Devon EX12 2PF. Telephone 0297 20456.

AMSTRAD NORTH WEST USER'S CLUB, 4 Sutton Road, Gorton, Manchester M18 7PN. Telephone 092575 5262.

ADVANTAGE USER GROUP, 33 Malyn's Close, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX9 4EW. Contact JEFFREY GREEN.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT USER CLUB, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middlesex.

SOUTHSIDE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, P O Box 324, Gosnells 6110, Western Australia. Contact DEBBIE HOFFMAN Telephone 09-4598702.

SOLENT AMSTRAD CLUB, c/o 1 Dimond Close, Bitterne Park, Southampton SO2 4UF. Telephone Southampton 558075 after 5pm. Contact BILL KENT.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT COMPUTER CLUB, 19 Beach Green, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex BN4 5YG. Telephone 0273 463111. Contact GEORGE SEARS.

CAMELCLUB Wellpark, Willeys Avenue, Exeter. Telephone 0392 21189. Contact JOHN KENEALLY.

TARANAKI AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact: HUGH WILSON, C/O PowerCorp, 71 Brougham Street, P O Box 370, New Plymouth, Ph 88-526 Work, Ph 67-612 A/H.

WHANGAREI AND MID NORTHLAND USER'S CLUB, Contact: MIKE RICKETT, Utopia Road, RD1 Paparoa, Northland, Ph PAP 37060.

FRANKLIN AREA AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact MR C A MACDONALD, 22 Totara Street, Waiuku Ph 58183 WKU.

NEW PLYMOUTH AMSTRAD USER CLUB, Contact F G SOUSTER, 5 Taunton Place, New Plymouth, Ph 86501.

TOKOROA AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact STAN WALTON - Chairman, C/O 30 Benella Street, Tokoroa, Ph 65-491.

MS CHRISTINE LINFOOT, AMSTRAD CANTERBURY, P O Box 23,079, Templeton, Christchurch, New Zealand.

AMSTRAD CHRISTCHURCH, Contact CHRISTINE LINFOOT, Ph 897413, Ian Orchard, Ph 524-064, P O Box 24174, East Linwood, Christchurch.

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMPUTER CLUB, MR J CHILDS, 57 Manor Gardens, Buckden, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE18 9TW.

CONGLETON AND DISTRICT COMPUTER CLUB, MR G A HARRATT, 19 Walgrave Close, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 4TS.

MICROBEACON SUPPORTERS GROUP, MR J PALMER, Microbeacon Project, 29 Guthrie Street, Edinburgh, Scotland.

PRESTON COMPUTER CLUB (PACE), MR L HOWARTH, 41 St Walburge Avenue, Preston, Lancs, PR2 2QT.

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WESTERN SUBURBS AMSTRAD USERS GROUP, The Secretary, MR J JAMES, 36 Penong Street, Westlake, Brisbane 4074, Australia.

SYNTAX ERROR COMPUTER CLUB NORDHORN, (ALL COMPUTERS), Contact: FRED WEBER, Laarstrabe 23, 4460 Nordhorn, Tel: 059-21-13149, Germany.

CPC CLUBGRUNDUNG ANGESTREBT, Contact: KREIS BORKEN.

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CLUBRUNGDUNG, Im Raum Hanau-Gelnhusen, Richard Luppert, Gartenstrasse 18, 6456 Langenselbold, Germany.

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CPC CLUB BORKEN, KARSTEN KAMMLER, Heinrich-Hertz-strasse 4, 4280 Borken-Gemen, Germany.

CPC USER CLUB-GRUNDUNG, 6128 AND 664 BESITZER, SVEN MARTIN, Ostreubenstrasse 3, 3590 Bad Wildungen, Germany.

MICHAEL DECKER, Im Richelnberg 36, 5166 Kreuzau, Germany.

SCHNEIDER COMPUTER CLUB N-H-W, OLIVER THIELE, Am Kirchweg 49, 5908 Neunkirchen 5, Germany.

SCHNEIDER CPC CLUB BATREUTH, MARCO KONARD, Fontanestrasse 4, 8580 Bayreuth, Germany.

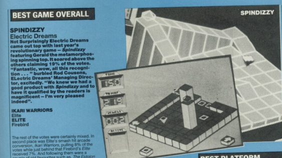


THE 1986 AMTIX! READERS' AWARDS

THE DEFINITIVE AWARDS FOR THE BEST SOFTWARE OF 1986!

Well, you filled out the forms and sent them to us (the Competition Minion spent hours opening them all) – and now, after many late nights of collating over a hot (and somewhat sweaty) keyboard, we are proud to present . . . THE RESULTS!!

BEST GAME OVERALL



SPINDIZZY

SPINDIZZY
Electric Dreams

Not Surprisingly Electric Dreams came out top with last year's revolutionary game – *Spindizzy* featuring Gerald the metamorphosing spinning top. It soared above the others claiming 19% of the votes. "Fantastic, wow, all this recognition . . . " burbled Rod Cousens, ELectric Dreams' Managing Director, excitedly. "We knew we had a good product with *Spindizzy* and to have it qualified by the readers is magnificent – I'm very pleased indeed".

IKARI WARRIORS
Elite
ELITE
Firebird

The rest of the votes were certainly mixed. In second place was Elite's smash hit arcade conversion, *Ikari Warriors*, pulling 8% of the votes while just behind that Firebird's *Elite* received 7%. And following them were a couple of old favourites such as, *The Eidolon* with 6% of the votes, *Gauntlet* also with 6% and *Lightforce* with 5%.

SCORE: 00150 01 HI-SCORE: 01000
THE HOUSE

MONTY ON THE RUN

BEST PLATFORM GAME

MONTY ON THE RUN
Gremlin Graphics

Although Monty was a bit late arriving on the Amstrad it would appear that he's gone down very well. *Monty On The Run* won 29% of the votes – obviously it's the business for platform freaks. Sue Quinn at Gremlin was thrilled with the news; "Magic!", she exclaimed, "I feel very attached to Monty Mole, he deserves to do well and hopefully by this time next year the follow up, *Auf Wiedesen Monty*, will do equally as well".

SCOOBY DOO
Elite
BRUCE LEE
US Gold
THING ON A SPRING
Gremlin Graphics

There was a tie for second place *Scooby Doo*, *Bruce Lee* and *Thing On A Spring* (another Gremlin creation) all romped home with 4%. Other favourites were *Bounder* (Gremlin again), *Dan Dare*, *Jack the Nipper* and Mastertronic's *Zub*. Platform games would appear to be as popular today as they were in Willy's day

THE 1986 AMTIX! R

BEST SHOOT 'EM UP

LIGHTFORCE
Gargoyle Games

Shoot 'em ups are not commonplace on the Amstrad but they're usually very good when one does arrive. Obviously your favourite was *Lightforce* from Gargoyle – a company who actually began their life in the software world with a shoot 'em up called *AD Astra*. They reaped a massive 24% of the votes. "Ooo, haven't we done well – It's nice to know that we're continuing to provide products that the public are pleased with. Very satisfying" said Roy Carter. "A big thank you to all the readers – just wait until they see *Shockway Rider* – it's even better" enthused Greg Follis.

IKARI WARRIORS
Elite
TEMPEST
Electric Dreams

Once more *Ikari Warriors* was just pipped at the post by *Lightforce*. It received a total of 16% of the votes which isn't bad going at all. Just behind that was *Tempest* with 10%. Other notables were *Commando*, *Elite* and, surprising, only 1% of you would appear to regard *Gauntlet* as a shoot 'em up.

BEST ARCADE ADVENTURE

GET DEXTER
PSS/ERE

The magical graphic adventure from last Spring brought in 16% of the votes for PSS. Gary Mays was moved to say; "Really? How nice . . . ". We think it's nice too Gary.

BATMAN
Ocean
GAUNTLET
US Gold
HEARTLAND
Odin

Arcade Adventures have always been popular on the Amstrad but just below Get Dexter was a firm favourite – Jon Ritman's *Batman* – receiving 11% of the votes. Just behind that was tie for third place with *Gauntlet* and *Heartland* both getting 8%.

BEST ADVENTURE

HEAVY ON THE MAGICK
Gargoyle Games

Not content with just being awarded best shoot 'em up, Gargoyle's *Heavy On The Magick* also wins them Best Adventure of 1986. Although a slightly tenuous adventure it proved popular with 12% of our readers. Said Roy Carter of Gargoyle, after he had finished jumping around his office with excitement; "It's terrific – nice to know we're also doing something right in the adventure world. A big thank you to all your readers."

HITCH HIKERS GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
Infocom
PRICE OF MAGICK
Level 9

Just behind the Magickal one fell an Infocom offering – *The Hitch Hikers Guide To The Galaxy* which deserved its 10% of the votes. Just behind that were Level 9 with their *Price Of Magick* with, ironically, 9% of the votes. Another Infocom game, *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* also did rather well for itself gathering a tidy 8% of the votes.

BEST STRATEGY GAME

THEATRE EUROPE
PSS

PSS are best known for their strategy, which they do very well with and just to prove the point *Theatre Europe* managed 11% of the votes. Gary Mays once more . . . "Marvellous news. I'm very pleased indeed – but just wait until you see some of the stuff we're bringing out in 87 . . . "

TOBRUK
PSS
DOOMDARK'S REVENGE
Beyond

PSS also did well – leaping firmly into second place with *Tobruk* which drew 7% and Mike Singleton's landscaping adventure, *Doomdark's Revenge*, managed third place with a total of 6% of the votes.

BEST SIMULATION

TOMAHAWK
Digital Integration

Again another game that took its time in the coming, but on arrival was a big hit and drew in a huge 35% of the votes – the biggest majority win of all the awards. "Marvellous! Good News! I'm very pleased with the AMTIX! readers response to *Tomahawk* – and we'll have more superb products coming out in 1987 that I hope will do equally well" said Dave Marshall at Digital Integration.

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER
Mirrorsoft
WINTER GAMES
US Gold
TOP GUN
Ocean

Trailing behind with 10% came Mirrorsoft's *Strike Force Harrier* and coming equal third were *Winter Games* from US Gold and *Top Gun* from Ocean – both drawing 5% of the votes. A few other names cropped up, including *Spitfire 40* with 3% and poor old *Elite*, which only managed 1%.

BEST GRAPHICS

SPINDIZZY
Electric Dreams

It's back! Acclaimed for its outstanding 3D isometric landscapes that were very technically precise and got them 16% of the votes. Once more Rod Cousens was moved to comment; "Best Graphics too! Wow! We're even more pleased – a big thanks to the readers – it really means something when we get recognition from them."

GET DEXTER
PSS/ERE
BATMAN
Ocean

The first look in from over the channel; Get Dexter, PSS and ERE's offering drew 11% while another 3D game, *Batman*, romped into third place with 9%. *The Eidolon*, *Ikari Warriors* and *Winter Games* also did rather well.

BEST MUSIC

MONTY ON THE RUN
Gremlin Graphics

It was a close contest, but eventually Rob Hubbard's bouncy tune won with 9% of the total votes. Sue Quinn became even more excited with the news and after returning to her normal temperament stated "Wow!, gosheroony!". We think they're happy. As for Rob himself he says, "Oh . . . I didn't actually program it y'know. I just wrote it . . . I don't think I've ever heard it on the Amstrad . . . " Ho hum.

READERS' AWARDS

GLIDER RIDER
Quicksilva
COMMANDO
Elite
HARVEY HEADBANGER
Firebird
DRAGON'S LAIR
Software Projects

Collecting second place is *Glider Rider* for its two different David Whittaker tracks – taking 8%. Joint third place winners were *Commando*, *Harvey Headbanger* and *Dragons's Lair* which all received 4%.

BEST SOUND FX

IKARI WARRIORS
Elite

Lots of bashing and booming made *Ikari Warriors* winner in this section drawing 6% of votes. "*Ikari Warriors* was a good product it's very encouraging that people like your games right down to things like sound effects," said Steve Wilcox of Elite.

DRUID
Firebird
SPINDIZZY
Electric Dreams
TEMPEST
Electric Dreams

Once more another draw for second place with *Druid*, *Spindizzy* and *Tempest* all getting 5% of the votes.

MONTY ON THE RUN

BEST PROGRAMMER

PAUL SHIRLEY

The elusive Mr Shirley doesn't like telephones, so he was unavailable for comment at the time – luckily, Rod Cousens of Electric Dreams stepped in with a few words of praise for Paul: "It was an excellent product from an excellent programmer – I'm really chuffed with all these awards". The best is yet to come Mr Cousens . . .

JON RITMAN
STEPHEN CROW

Steve Crow of Bubble Bus' *Wizards Lair* and *Starquake* is obviously a firm favourite with you all as he came second with 5% of the votes. Just behind him with 4% was Jon Ritman, who was responsible for *Batman* and his new game – *Head Over Heals*.

BEST SOFTWARE HOUSE

ELITE

Elite must be very pleased with themselves as they did well in the CRASH and ZZAP! awards as well. Steve Wilcox was pleased with his 19% win; "Well, thanks. It's great to get some credit at long last. May thanks to the AMTIX! readers for voting us top and I'd also like to thank all the programmers for their marvellous effort and special thanks to David Shea for all the help he's been."

GREMLIN GRAPHICS
GARGOYLE GAMES

IKARI WARRIORS

After Elite, Gremlin Graphics would appear to be the most popular. They drew a respectable 13% and old favourites, Gargoyle, came third with a pleasing total of 10%. All good houses with some super products being promised for this year.

BEST ADVERTISEMENT

FIRELORD
Hewsons

Behind a good advertisement doesn't always lie a decent game – but Hewson would appear to have the right mixture. *Firelord* came top with 8% of the votes. Debbie, Hewson's advertising girlie, was very excited; "Oh, I'm really pleased. We decided at the end of the year that we'd hire a permanent artist to upgrade all our ad work – and to have this recognition from the public is superb. Thanks to all the readers because in the end it's them that really matter."

HEARTLAND
Odin
THANATOS
Durell
TOPGUN
Ocean

Odin did well for themselves as expected with their *Heartland* advertisement. Their consistent style earned them 4% of the votes. *Thanatos* and *Topgun* also drew 4% of the votes as well. We wonder if the games themselves have anything to do for the decision . . .

LEAST PLEASING GAME

KNIGHT RIDER
Ocean
BEACH HEAD II
US Gold
WORLD CUP CARNIVAL
US Gold

Winning outright with a total of 11% of the votes was Ocean's long awaited *Knight Rider*. David Ward, MD of Ocean, was unavailable for comment, but Ocean say that it is a big disappointment. Also hurtling in were two US Gold products, *Beach Head II* and *World Cup Carnival*. US Gold's Richard Tidsall's reaction was; "Good God! I see . . . " However, we're sure that they'll be mending their ways soon.

STATE OF THE ART AWARD

SPINDIZZY
Electric Dreams

And so, without a doubt the State Of The Art award predictably goes to Electric Dream's *Spindizzy*. Rod Cousens once more jumped for joy; "Extremely happy! I can't say how grateful everyone at Electric Dreams are for the generosity of the readers. We're delighted with the outcome and we're looking forward to producing some more excellent games in the future."

THE EIDOLON
Activision
GAUNTLET
US Gold
DRUID
Firebird

There was little doubt that *Spindizzy* would do well – it finally managed to draw in 29% of the total votes. *The Eidolon* came second with a voting percentage of 6%, and following that closely was US Gold's *Gauntlet* with 5%. So, it looks like *Spindizzy* was certainly the game of 1986 – as for 1987 the *Sentinel* looks as if it will do extremely well. But that, dear readers, is up to you . . .

So there we have it – the AMTIX! Readers Awards for 1986. Thanks to everyone who took the trouble to vote, and congratulations to all the programmers and software houses who received awards – your trophies will be despatched shortly.

Well, that's another year in the bag – and another ten forms out of it! The following lucky voters each win £20 worth of software and an AMTIX! T-Shirt . . .

Darren Newnham, Swanley BR8 7UB; Graham Fox, Salford M5; David Smith, Edmonton, N9 8JH; John Wilson, Bridge of Weir PA11 3SX; Philip Williams, Ashby De La Zouch LE6 5FS; Angelo Charteris, Droitwich; Stephen Hull, St Helens WA11 9EY; Patrick Taylor, Church Lane, London SE7 7AZ; Jason Oldham, Coventry CV6 6DA; Neil Milligan, Hessle HU13 0NT.



RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES

BY OWEN AND AUDREY BISHOP

This month we bring a new feature to this column – TAC-TIPS. These winning tips for wargamers explain how to recognise when a particular tactic should be used, how to set about it, the pitfalls to avoid, and how to exploit the advantage you have created. We back this up with examples from real battles, explaining what went right – or what went wrong. We shall also refer you to wargames software with which you can try out you new tactical skills.

CENTRAL BREAKTHROUGH

This is a pretty obvious tactic, but it has its problems. It is also one of the oldest. The earliest example we can find is the Battle of Chaeronea between the Macedonians and the Greeks in 338 BC. It also featured at El Alamein in World War II so, whatever the period you are playing, this tactic can have its uses.

Figure 1 shows the general scheme. The enemy (black) is lined up for battle with both flanks safe. Here the enemy is against a deep river on one flank and against difficult terrain (steep hills) on the other. It is not possible for you (white) to outflank the enemy so the obvious thing to do is attack his centre. But take care! If all your troops dash at the enemy's centre and fail to get through, his flanks can curl round and encircle you. This means you must have a fairly powerful central force ready for attack. If you can do this without the enemy getting wind of your manoeuvre, so much the better. This may be possible in a wargame which has the hidden movement feature. It allows you to mount a surprise attack with a force far larger than the enemy expects. If you have some reserves to spare, hold these back (2nd reserves in Figure 1) ready to exploit any gains made later.

Whatever you do, do not weaken your flanks to provide the strength you need in the centre. This invites the enemy to encircle you and wind up your line. Your flank forces have something more positive to do. They can attack the enemy flanks – not aiming to break through but just strongly enough to keep them busy. Their job is to pin the enemy down and perhaps tempt him to commit precious reserves to reinforce the flanks. If you are lucky, the enemy might also move units from his centre to strengthen his flanks. When the time is right (Figure 2), you advance in force and engage the enemy centre. Your superior numbers should carry you through. The enemy line is disorganised and his army is split in two. Now you turn outward to left and to right, encircling his forces which now have their back up against the river or the hills. Use your reserves where they are most needed.

John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, and ancestor of Winston Churchill, was a master of this tactic. He used it to good effect at the Battle of Blenheim (Figure 4). The French and Bavarian enemy forces, led by the Comte de Tallard, had taken up a defensive position with their flanks protected by the River Danube and some wooded hills. He also had the advantage of three towns which he had fortified as strong-points. On top of this he had 5600 men and 90 guns, compared with Marlborough's 5200 men and 60 guns. He thought Marlborough (M) would not dare to attack.

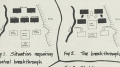
The battle began with a diversionary attack by M's right flank on forces in the village of Lutsingen. At the same time M mounted a fierce attack on the fortified town of Blenheim. This so scared the French commander that he called up a massive force, including many infantry from the centre, to defend Blenheim. There were soon so many French in Blenheim it resulted in chaos. M's attackers held them down in the burning village and they were virtually out of the battle.

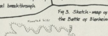
Now M launched his massive attack at the weakened French centre. And that was that! M broke through successfully, with a loss of 23% of his force. Tallard lost 70%. Figure 3 shows how Tallard would have been wiser to have taken up a position further to the north-east before the arrival of M. The gap between the woods and river is narrower there. He could have deployed his men in a much deeper formation, making M's tactic unworkable.

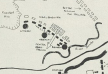
Poor old Simon de Montfort fared less well using the same tactic at the Battle of Evesham (Figure 4). Prince Edward and the Duke of Gloucester barred his progress with their flanks nicely protected by the River Avon. Had he been able to, he would have probably decided to retreat westward but Mortimer had come up behind him and held the bridge. With 3500 men, Simon decided to advance. Instead of advancing on a broad front, he decided to try for a central breakthrough. He formed his men into a narrow column, hoping to burst through by sheer impact on the centre of the enemy's line. But he lacked the flank support essential for this operation. The enemy line gave, but did not break. Their flanks wheeled round and soon Simon's column was encircled. A brave try, but the conditions for the breakthrough were not properly met.

He was killed and lost over half his men.

Though the Battle of El Alamein involved several other tactical elements, it does show some features of the central break-through. Rommel's forces were lined up with their flanks on the Mediterranean coast and on the Qattara depression. Monty created diversions both on the north and south flanks before successfully making his main thrust through the German lines at Kidney Ridge. Try this tactic when you next play *Desert Rats* (**CCS Ltd**). You will need to select the 2-player game for this particular tactic because, in the 1-player game, the Germans abandon their defensive position and retreat westward across the desert before you have a chance to put the tactic into effect. Rommel might have wanted to retreat too, but he had been ordered by Hitler to stay put!







GENESIS

The birth of a game

Ever wondered how a computer game is created? Our free range London correspondent, JOHN MINSON, recently sat in on the first meeting of interested parties discussing the plot for a game resulting from a competition run in one of our sister titles last year. With nose held here's his report on a game which should grace Arnold later this year.

"Here's one for you, Minson," the wrinkly one shouted. "We want you to go down and take a look at *The Sewer*!"

"What?!! I know I'm versatile, but my contract doesn't cover sludging around in the shiny brown stuff.

"No, not the sewer," Harding explained, trying to calm me down, *The Sewer* – the second game to emerge from the **Newsfield** and **Domark** *Genesis* contest.

Still uncertain about Malcolm's parting remark, that he was sorry he couldn't find a 'real' sewer for me, but maybe next time . . . I set off for the icy wastes of Wimbledon and the apparently endless Worple Road.

I arrived late. Thirty minutes late. But as cuddly Dave Carlos, big man at **Inter-Mediates**, and co-ordinator of the project, said, they hadn't expected me to be on time, which is why they were starting half an hour late.

I eventually found a place at the **Domark** boardroom table, which was already well-filled. To my left was Richard Naylor, **Domark**'s software manager, while **Design Design** was represented by Graham Stafford and David Llewellyn, on my right. Keeping the peace, at the bottom of the table, were Dave Carlos and his **Inter-Mediates** cohort, Graham Knappett.

That left just one person - by far the most important individual in the room – 16 year-old Martin Lee, who seemed remarkably fresh after his long trek from his home in Exeter. Martin had designed board games before, but never anything for the computer.

I cast my eyes over his proposal, which had taken a month to prepare. It was impressive, to say the least – 22 pages devoted to everything, from his general concept to details of the problems that players would encounter. Martin had been so afraid that it was too detailed that he'd enclosed a special plea for the judges to take the time to read it.

A CLEVER COMBINATION

He needn't have worried. His clever combination of puzzle solving and arcade action had impressed everyone, including Mel Croucher, a man who's been involved with computing long enough to recognise a winner when he sees one.

Martin's proposal is particularly strong on the graphics side, with characters drawn on squared paper, and it was no surprise to find that Martin includes art among his hobbies - in fact, he's currently studying it at college! But though he'd like to design more computer games, he's not a programmer.

Of course, with the likes of **Design Design** turn *The Sewer* into reality, he really doesn't need to know a Peek from a Poke. They'd already come up with the first *Genesis* winner, *Kat Trap*, before Christmas, and only the pressure of their other projects had kept them from some *Sewer* engineering. As Martin said, it had been a long wait, but now things were about to happen.

Graham and David of **Design Design** had studied the plan and were bursting with questions and suggestions about to how it should be treated. They'd be programming on an Amstrad - though Martin is actually a Commodore owner! - because it's easier to convert to other formats from an Arnold. A Commodore version could follow though, depending on how difficult the coding proves to be.

The Sewer is an arcade strategy game, set in the crumbling (Crumbly?) pipes beneath a city. There a collection of foul creatures roam free, waiting for the team of unsuspecting workmen, sent down by an opportunistic mayor with an eye to the forthcoming election!

Soon saving the workmen had become an

The team get down to the business of the day. Left to right, they are David Llewellyn, Graham Stafford, Dave Carlos, Graham Knappett, Martin Lee, Richard Naylor..





GENESIS
The birth of a game

What have I let myself in for, muses young Martin Lee.

Richard Naylor, Domark's software manager.

even bigger problem than the sewers themselves. As if the wandering wildlife isn't bad enough, there are broken pipes spewing out acid, crumbling rocks and all manner of problems. An old, but reliable, Service Manipulator robot is the only way to save the workers.

The first thing to sort out was just how large each level would be. Obviously the computer's memory plays a critical part in this decision, and so does the way that the plans for each level are stored. Martin had suggested at least 16 levels, four screens by four screens in size.

A long debate followed as to the feasibility of this, with Graham suggesting a window technique, opening onto a three by three level, but with most of the action confined to the visible screen area. This would allow for a smooth four way scroll between screens. Meanwhile Dave Carlos pointed out that as water rises, it would make sense to have the exit at the top of a level. It was obvious that his scientific training would be invaluable for us!

A ROCKY PROBLEM

The Sewer system features a variety of rocks, which have to be used correctly if an escape route is to be planned. The permanent rock stays where it is, but collapsible rock can be picked up to plug pipes or to squash the nasties. There's also soft rock, which the acid eats through.

Graham suggested that the best way to hold this map in memory would be to have a byte to indicate whether an area was water, acid or a type of rock, with reference to an x-y axis. This would be a quick system, even if it wasn't the most memory efficient.

However he did suggest that he'd like to see a fourth type of mineral, so that he could squeeze every last bit out of the bytes available. Permeable rock, which would let water through but which a man could stand on, was suggested, but Graham wasn't too keen on this, owing to the difficulties of indicating rock and water simultaneously in memory.

At this stage somebody suggested that the game was inevitably going to be compared with *Boulderdash*. There are certain similarities, but as Dave Carlos pointed out, every computer game looks like something that's gone before and you could do worse than being compared with a classic like *Boul-*

David Llewellyn (left) and Graham Stafford of Design Design.

derdash. Point taken!

So, having had some thoughts about the landscape, it was on to the characters themselves. Martin had drawn them large on graph paper, and Graham's first question was whether he intended them to look 'blocky' or if they should be smoother as they were reduced in size. There should be no need to worry about the size of the sprites, at least, as there would be plenty of memory available for them.

Martin had created a clever selection of nasties, each with its own special characteristics designed to hinder - or if you use them cleverly, perhaps to help - you. First up was a leech, and this led to the first heated debate of the meeting - How does a leech move?

Graham was very persuasive, giving a convincing impersonation of a leech at full tilt. Somebody even suggested a visit to the Natural History Museum, to ensure accuracy. But it took the expert voice of Carlos to put us all right. Dave's zoological training had left him with experience of leeches!

Next there was Martin's piranha, which was supposed to jump out of the water. Graham thought that this might be too ambitious. Anyhow, there's a software house that goes by that fishy name, and **Domark** wouldn't want to offend it. So we began to look for alternative aquatic nasties.

Eels were a wriggly favourite for a while. Electric held quite a charge and everyone danced to the conger. Dave Carlos, who was fast revealing himself the David Bellamy of the software industry, claimed to have had experience of conger eels, too, but in the end they were rejected because they look too much like the leeches.

ALLIGATORS OR CRABS!

Somebody snapped that we should try alligators, but apart from being another software house, they're big - "At least eight bytes long!" exclaimed Graham in horror. Then we considered crabs, though when I asked Dave whether he'd ever experienced these, he told me not to be personal. I wonder what he meant! The rat caused fewer problems, with four frames of animation and a fifth for when it jumped, but when it came to the snail, Graham said that it didn't seem to be much use. All it does is leave a sticky trail. Yes, said Martin, but you can use that trail, and he referred us to one of the specimen puzzles at the end of his proposal. Sure enough, the seemingly innocuous snail played an important role in freeing a man. Graham was impressed. "Damned devious," he mused.

A study in concentration from Messrs Dave Carlos and Graham Knappett of Inter Mediates fame. ▽





The manipulator, which is the object you move around the screen, presented a few problems of its own. It has to be able to pick up men and objects and either drop them or throw them at enemies. But Martin had already realised that people prefer games that can be completely controlled with a joystick so had ingeniously used the fire button with the stick to obtain different effects.

By now the brainstorming session was running smoothly, with Graham throwing out possible problems from the programming end and Martin and the rest of us suggesting solutions. It's said that genius is 3 per cent inspiration and 97 per cent perspiration - but that fails to mention the countless cups of coffee that were fuelling our efforts!

It didn't take long though to sort out the question of the console. In his original plan, Martin wanted a second screen which could be called up to display contain control icons and details on the game's progression. Graham wasn't keen on the idea. Instead he suggested that there should be consoles scattered around the sewers, which the player could access with the manipulator. It seemed a much more integrated approach to the problem, and was quickly accepted.

That only left one major feature – electricity! "I don't quite see the logic of it." said Graham. The original design called for wires, which could be switched off, causing them to disappear. But Graham was worried that they just added an unnecessary complication.

The atmosphere became quite charged as we volt-ed this hurdle. I don't know at this stage whether cables will form a main feature of the game, because in the end a compromise was reached. At the time of writing, the electricity is out, but if it becomes necessary for gameplay it can easily be revived at a later stage.

A FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE

And that's an important part of the process of creating a game. Martin's original idea had already undergone some changes, and more are likely to arise as the **Design Design** team get down to business, discovering what will work and what won't.

I asked Martin whether he felt that his game had been torn to bits, but he was quite cheerful about the meeting. "There's not been anything too drastic," he said philosophically. "In fact, it's much better."

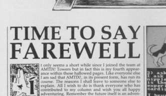
When it comes to creation you can divide people into the fundamentalists, who believe that the world happened as the Bible's Genesis says. and evolutionists, who follow Darwin. I'm not going to get into theological debate, but in games terms, evolution wins hands down.

What had happened, in those two hours round the table, was the evolution of a great idea into something that will work in practice. **Design Design**'s experience, coupled with suggestions from the rest of us, had polished those twenty two pages of planning into a potential masterpiece.

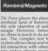
And there's more evolving to come. The game itself is very open ended, which means that each screen may be solved in a number of ways. That calls for heavy play-testing, because anybody who is close to the project could easily overlook something that is quite obvious to an outsider. That screen we all thought was so difficult may be obvious to a newcomer.

However *The Sewer*'s open-endedness is a major part of its attraction, and it was a feature that Mel Croucher particularly liked, right from the start. As Richard Naylor said to Martin, as the meeting broke up, "You didn't realise what you'd designed."

So we all went our separate ways. Martin leaves *The Sewer* in the hands of Graham, his graphics designer and the rest of the *Design Design* team, confident their expertise won't let it go down the drain. And I walked back down Worple Road, confident that I was in at the start of something big!



TIME TO SAY FAREWELL



It only seems a short while since I joined the team at AMTIX! Towers but in fact this is my fourth appearance within these hallowed pages. Like everyone else I am sad that AMTIX!, in its present form, has run its course. The reasons I shall leave to someone else to explain. All I wish to do is thank everyone who has contributed to my column and wish you all happy adventuring. Remember the future itself is an adventure so enjoy it!

It's ironic my last column is somewhat lacking in reviews but it is more than made up by the Arcana section which is packed with solutions and hints.

THE GROWING PAINS OF ADRIAN MOLE

Virgin, £9.95 cass,

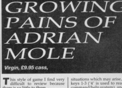
This style of game I find very difficult to review because there is so little to them.

You 'play' the part of Adrian Mole in a game which covers 18 months of his life. You make decisions for him, concerning certain situations which may arise, using keys 1-3 ('4' is used to reach the command/help system), and your general aim is to become as popular as possible with everybody.

The game is in four separate sections during which you mature from Spotty Schoolboy to Paragon of Virtue with a score dependent on your current popularity. Mediocre Graphics cover the top third of the screen and the events and results of your decisions scroll up beneath.

Level 9 programmed the game (as with it's predecessor *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole*) and personally, I can't wait for them to get back to proper adventures. The text is amusing and plentiful, but there is far too little to do. I played all four sections in approximately ninety minutes with a final score of just below 90%. I was quite happy with this attempt, sufficiently so as not to warrant me playing the game again. For the asking price, I feel *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* is extortionate. Having said that, the first one was successful and I suppose this one will follow in it's footsteps, although why it should do so is beyond me!





Atmosphere	40%
Plot	50%
Interaction	N/A
Lastability	28%
Value for Money	25%
Overall	29%

THE PAWN

Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls, £19.95 disk

The Pawn places the player in the mythical land of Kerovnia, with the sole objective of making his escape. However, before doing so, there is much to do and lots to see. The complex text handling system allows deep and meaningful interaction with other characters and/or objects encountered, to the extent that peripheral tasks soon become prevalent. To quote the press release sent to me by Clare Edgeley of **Rainbird**, "All characters and objects are represented as if they existed in a real world, storing complex information about their attributes and properties linked to their particular position or context in the game." I'll go along with that.

The CPC6128 program has all of the features contained in other versions: Sophisticated Parser, Word Processor style Line Editor, option to Save a Game Position to Disk and Graphics On/Off Toggle. The only difference that I can see is that the graphics displayed scroll up off the screen when data is needed from the disk. This (I



am told!) is because the graphics are in a different screen mode to the text, and there is insufficient processor power to show the picture and access the disk drive at the same time. This is no big deal, and it does not detract from the gameplay at all.

I think that by now, every adventure reviewer in the United Kingdom has raved about *The Pawn*. There is not much to add to what has already been said, the story and some of the puzzles will probably be known to you, especially if you read the February issue of AMTIX!

The CPC6128 version of *The Pawn* is excellent, although the text did seem a little blurred to me, but then the eyes are not what they used to be . . . the middle one is very weak!

Save up your pennies and buy *The Pawn*, it's probably the finest adventure to have been released to date.

Now if you'll excuse me, I have a short-sighted dragon to deal with . . .

Atmosphere	97%
Plot	98%
Interaction	98%
Lastability	98%
Value for Money	97%
Overall	98%

IMAGINATION

Firebird, £1.99 cass

It is going to be very difficult to review *Imagination* without mentioning Mr Torrence's previous successes, but the man's had more than enough plugs in AMTIX! of late, therefore I'm determined his latest adventure will be the only one to grace this particular issue!

Sub-Sunk and *Seabase Delta* were both enjoyable games, including such ingredients as wit, atmosphere, OK graphics and a reasonable plot and puzzles. *Imagination* (unlike *Apache Gold*) is a good follow up.

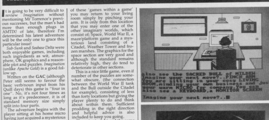
Written on the **GAC** (although Peter still seems to favour the basic verb/noun input from his Quill days) this game is "four in one". No, it's not four times as long as it's predecessor, it is of standard memory size simply split into four parts.

The adventure begins with the player sitting at his home micro having just acquired a mysterious disk from the local retailer. Inserting the disk and looking at the screen gives you a choice of four differing scenarios to enter into and, in a similar if lesser vein than *Lords of Time*, objects and answers are collected from one game to be used in another. The ultimate objective is to count the number of stars in the universe, (the end sequence could have been more inspiring!) although exactly why remains a mystery. When in one of these 'games within a game' you may return to your living room simply by pinching your arm. It is only from this location that you may enter one of the other imaginary worlds, which consist of; Space, World War II, a maze/platform game and a mysterious land consisting of a Citadel, Weather Tower and frozen marshes. The graphics for the space section are very good and although the standard remains relatively high, they do tend to deteriorate in other sections.

This is a nice little game, even if number of the puzzles are somewhat obscure, (the connection between the World War II tank and the Bull outside the Citadel for example), consisting of less than forty locations but giving the player plenty to do and think about within them. Sufficient prodding in the right direction and helpful advice is also included to keep you going.

The price is right and the game is good. This is yet another winner for **Firebird** and Mr Torrence.

Atmosphere	58%
Plot	58%
Interaction	60%
Lastability	60%
Value for Money	72%
Atmosphere	58%
Overall	61%







As usual I've been astounded at the amount of response I've received from fellow adventurers. Lots of tips and solutions have come in and I've done my best to put the best of them in this issue.

LORD OF THE RINGS (Melbourne House) Part Two Solution

A solution from a mystery Hobbit, the name and address parted company with the epitaph. Anyway, if you can complete this part it's the end of the whole adventure. Amazing huh?

From the first location, go NE to the Trollshaws. You will find a mithril shirt and Glorfindel the elf in the Trollshaws. Once you have found Glorfindel and the white stallion, move back onto the highway and get on the horse. Now go E, Stallion "E", Stallion "E", Stallion "E", Stallion "E". During this time you will have been chased by mounted black riders but they won't catch you on horse. You will find yourself on the far side of the ford and watching with pleasure the demise of the Black Riders in the ford. Your companions can now be instructed to go E, E, E, E to meet Frodo in the valley. Now go E, N, E and you will find yourself in the Hall of Fire. Bilbo will be here and will offer you some food which is needed by now. If Bilbo asks to have the ring don't give it to him – he eventually will lead you up to his room and give you a Mithril shirt. Go E, S, W to the great hall where the council of Elrond takes place. From the great hall go E, S, W, S, SW, SE, SW, SE. You should now be in a valley by a lake – a good place to stop and eat. Take the bundles of food off the Pony and give them to Boromir and Gimli. Now go E, E and you will be in front of the entrance to Moria. To open the door simply say "Friend" and it opens. If a tentacle from the lake grabs Frodo then say "Slice tentacle with sword". You can now enter Moria. Once inside Moria go E, E, E, UP, UP, DOWN, W, DOWN, S, DOWN you should now be in a corridor blocked by a stone slab. Tell Boromir to smash the stone slab and continue E, E, UP – you should now find yourself at the northern end of the hall. Go E and the Balrog will appear but don't worry. Go E to be by the bridge and then SW (or it could be SE) so you are beside the fissure. Gandalf will then fight the Balrog on the bridge. Go NE, E, E, E. If necessary, wear your ring to get past the Balrog. You will now be on the threshold of Moria. If you're lucky most of your companions should still be alive at this point. From now on you should be on the Western bank of the river in Lothlorien. If you meet a taciturn elf here, ask him for help and he will take you to the eastern side of the river. From here, go NE, E, S, W, N and you will end up on the western edge. Go through a gate and E, E, E, UP. You'll then be greeted by Galadriel and Celeborn. If you now go DOWN, W, W, W, S, S, S with Galadriel and you will be on the bank of the Anduin. Gladriel will give each of the remaining Fellowship a gift and that is the end is the end of the adventure.
Phew!

ENCHANTER (Infocom) THE FULL SOLUTION

First make your way to the shack where you'll find a lantern, a jug and a loaf. Take all of these and light the lantern. Go then to the shady brook and fill the jug after which you can head off to the village. Here you should enter the hovel to the south where you will be given the Rezrov scroll. Write this into your spell book.

Now you can make your way to the castle, opening the gate with your recently acquired spell. Once inside the castle you can make your way to the Jewel Room at the top of the north-western tower. Get the egg and open it. Make your way to the north gate and from here go to the forest where you'll find the Krebf scroll. After you have written this into the book you can use it to repair the scroll which you found inside the egg. This gives you the Zifmia scroll which again should be written into you spell book.

Next go to the swamp and converse with the frogs. This should result in you obtaining the Cleesh scroll which again should be written into the spell book. Re-enter the castle and go to the library. You can take the book and read it. This gives a useful clue on how to complete the game telling as it does the legend of the unseen evil. The other legend is about the Implementers and this can be used for a bit of fun. You must examine the rat tracks. Doing this brings to your attention the rat hole inside of which is the Gondar scroll. Again write this into your spell book. Make sure you're not captured by the voices, simply go north if they appear.

Now you can go to the guarded door to drop the egg. You should be beginning to feel a little weary about now. Therefore go to the bedroom in the south-western tower and go to sleep on the bed. You'll dream of a lady with a scroll. When you awake examine the bedpost and press the button and the secret compartment will open (if you can't seen any button Rezrov the bedpost). You now have the Vaxum scroll. Write this into the spell book.

At this point you can go to the dungeon and enter the cell. Examine the wall and you'll find a loose block which when removed reveals a secret passage. Enter here and you'll find a silver spoon and write the spell into the book.

When you next sleep you will probably dream of being watched in a dark place. If you go to the gallery and extinguish the lantern. Remove the lighted portrait and you'll find the Ozmoo scroll. After writing this into the old, faithful spell book and having relit your lantern you can go to the courtyard.

When you're outside the temple learn the Ozmoo spell and then enter. You will be pounced upon by several shapes, relieved of your possessions and taken to a cell. Whilst here cast Ozmoo at yourself and wait. You will be taken to the sacrificial altar and sacrificed. However, because you are protected by the Ozmoo spell you will survive and have a sacrificial dagger for your troubles. Go and collect your belongings from the south cell and then leave the temple in a prompt fashion.

Now you should amble to the closet where you will find a jewelled box. Cut the ropes with the magic dagger and inside the box you will find the Melbor spell. Do your duty and write it into the spell book.

In your next kip you should dream about a comic figure opening a door. Go to hall of mirrors and wait for the bedraggled adventurer to appear. Zifmia him and then Vaxum him. Quickly head off east and journey to the guarded door. Drop the dagger and the spoon and wait for the adventurer to arrive. When he has taken the egg and spoon and the dagger ask him to open the door. If you ask him before he has all the treasures he may loot the map room. You can now go through the door into the map room where you should collect the map, the pencil and the Filfre scroll. If you cast Filfre you will be awarded with an entertaining fireworks display. If the adventurer starts to attack you just turn him into a newt.

Make your way to the beach and ask the turtle to follow you. Take him to the engine room and use the Exex on him (I use him only because it is difficult to decipher the sex of turtles). Now make the turtle go SE.

Leaving the turtle in the control room you can go to the translucent rooms which you'll find below the dungeon. Read the map then go to 'M'. Here you should draw a line form 'P' to 'F'. Wait for the evil presence to get near then erase the line from 'M' to 'V'. Next erase the line from 'P' to 'F' and then go to 'H'. Draw a line from 'H' to 'P' and go through the newly opened hole. You are now at 'P'. Take the Guncho scroll from here and head back to the engine room.

At the engine room you should Exex yourself and then cross the room with the infernal machine. You are now in the engine room. Place the Kulcad and, if you have it, the Guncho scrolls inside the turtle, Exex him and send him back to the engine room. Follow the turtle and retrieve the scroll from his shell. Now go to the stairs and learn the Gondar spell and the Cleash spell then Kulcad the stairs. You will begin to fall as the stair vanishes. However, reading the ornate scroll, which has miraculously appeared in your hands, reveals that you have a flying spell. Cast this and go east to find yourself in the presence of Krill (Hiss). He will send a couple of foes to trouble you but these can be easily vanquished with the spells you learnt on the stair. Cast the Guncho spell at Krill and you have completed the game.

It is a good idea to eat and drink when prompted as not doing so can have disastrous effects.

I should mention that although I have defeated Krill I have not scored maximum points in the game.

On the humorous side you can try to Rezrov the turtle and Zifmia the Implementers.

BEER HUNTER (Global)

You start off in the loo, so FLUSH TOILET and go W. GET MONEY and return E.NORTH, then WAKE DRUNK and down. TURN ON LIGHTS, and get everything that you find. Go up. You are now inside the pub. Get everything then EXAMINE and HUG BARMAID. Get KEY and go N. SWITCH OFF ALARM, GET ANYTHING that's there and E. N. Go west and get the trimmer from the poodle parlour then E. N. Get and fill the bottle and the glass. W. GET KNIFE. OPEN HATCH and down to the cellar. East to the passageway and East again. Go South to the bottom of the stairs, then west to the arcade. EXAM BANDIT, INSERT MONEY, GET COIN (or is INSERT COIN, GET MONEY? I can't remember). North to the bottom of the stairs. East to the drunk and down to outside the lift. East twice. GET INSTRUCTIONS, BUY BOX, READ INSTRUCTIONS, BUILD GLIDER. Return to outside the lift and enter it. PRESS BUTTON. N. E. ANDS, BUY TAPE. N. W. UP. GO BAR. BUY DRINK. S. Up. Here, make sure your glider is made before JUMPing.

After a while you will land up on the roof of the Ferrert. Down. OPEN BEETLE WITH KEYS AND

DRIVE. E.

Here you get nicked by the police and end up in jail. DIG TUNNEL. you are now in the lobby. Go South. BRIBE JUDGE JUDGE WITH MONEY (or coin) and exit Up. FILL POLYPIN, FILL TANKARD, take judges car to the front door which is North from the car. RING BELL. In the hallway DO NOT LOAD TAPE AS WILL RESTART GAME. ENTER PARTY and you will have completed the adventure.

BUGSY, PART ONE

A solution by Sandra Sharkey

You begin the adventure standing outside Deviney's Bar. Go to the square where you see a newsboy, TALK to NEWSBOY (you are now given some options in the form of a menu), type 'P', the poor kid is frightened to death of you so he coughs up with the dough.

You've committed your first crime – there's no turning back now. Go immediately to Deviney's bar where some hoods start shooting at you, be a brave bunny and ATTACK HOODS. Stay in the bar until two hoods approach you, one of them has a black mask hanging out of his pockets. TALK to MUSCLES, type 'Y' and buy the mask off him. Just for good measure type 'B' and bribe them as well.

Now that you've got the mask you can disguise yourself and rob the other two paperboys, you now have £25. Remove the mask and go to the gunsmiths, TALK to GUNSMITH and buy the gun. Now that you've managed to arm yourself go straight to the post office and rob it. (Score £118). Time to try and spread your wings so you decide to hop on a train to Downtown Chicago, but first you decide to get yourself some protection. Go to Deviney's and hire Muscles and Louie. (Score £18). Go to station and buy a ticket off the clerk, it costs £5. Go to the platform for Chicago and wait for a train. When it arrives type BOARD TRAIN.

You are met by a "welcoming committee" – good job you have Louie and Muscles with you. LOOK to find yourself in a railway station with two corpses. EXAMINE CORPSES, EXAMINE POCKETS to find £20. (Score £33). You go north where you find the rest of the "welcoming committee" waiting for you, so being a sensible bunny you hop on a train back sharpish!

Now that you're becoming a bit of a hoodlum yourself you decide to risk visiting the dingy side of town. Muscles takes care of the hood who is handy with a knife so you are now safe in this part of town. Go into the pawnshop and offer protection. (Score £72). You now have enough money to go to the costumiers and buy police costumes for yourself and the boys. (Score £12).

Take a stroll to the warehouse and go inside – you come out a whole lot richer. (Score £207). Go into Goodtime Charlie's, have a chat with Fergus and hire him and his men. Now you're ready for the big one. Go and rob the bank and you've completed part one.

The password for part two is BOSS BUNNY.

BUGSY, PART TWO

NOTES: The password is BOSS BUNNY. Type SCORE to find out your public enemy rating. When you're travelling by car and you decide to stop and enter a building type LEAVE CAR. GET CAR puts you back inside it. RAMSAVE frequently.

You begin the game in your plush-ish hotel room. Type SCORE to read 'I ain't on da Public Enemy list. I'm a nobody.' Go DOWN to the foyer and LEAVE. Now you ain't gonna get far without transport so go see your friendly local car salesman and buy the Cadillac. Now go north of the Long Road to the High-Jack Black Spot and examine the corpses. You get a business card which should now gain you entrance to the Hilton Plaza; but first go to the narrow alley outside the bookshop and ENTER. Talk to the man and type 'P' for protection. He will give you a valise stuffed full of money; but all is not what it seems. Take the valise to the Hilton Plaza and DROP VALISE, you are then forcibly removed from the premises. GET CAR and wait until you hear an explosion which wrecks the hotel, killing all the occupants. (SCORE: Public Enemy Number 8) Go to the Tib Bar and have a chat with Joe, Bribe him to get some useful information about a beer shipment that is coming in via the Hijacking Black Spot. Go to the casino, but don't gamble – it's a mug's game – instead TALK to the CROUPIER and offer protection. You receive $10,000. Go back to the car salesman and buy the Siciliano, a special armoured car. (SCORE: Public enemy number 7). Go to the Hijacking Black Spot and hijack the beer shipment. Money is now no object to you. You go back to your hotel room $75,000 the richer! (WHO says crime doesn't pay?) SCORE: Public Enemy number 6). You now become the victim of police harassment, but don't worry, these cops are very susceptible to bribery. Make your way to the Police Commissioner's office and bribe him, it costs a fortune but at least he keeps the irritating cop off your back. (SCORE: Public Enemy number 5).

You now decide to look for accommodation, more in keeping with your position in society, so go to the Ritz Carlton Hotel and TALK to MANAGER. Hire some rooms for yourself and boys. The manager takes you to your suite. (SCORE: Public Enemy number 4). Go back to the Tib bar and go upstairs. Here you meet Gentlemen George McGurk who suggests you go back to your headquarters for a little chat. Go and get your car and ENTER CAR, you can now go past the Loop. Stop outside the Four Deuces and LEAVE CAR. Go inside and ATTACK the GOONS. You can now go down to the cellar and GET the GUNS. You decide to have a break and visit the cinema but Muscles gets carried away and shoots up the screen resulting in your getting unceremoniously thrown out. (SCORE: Public Enemy number 2) Go to the garage forecourt and buy some overalls. Go back to the Metropole hotel and EAST on foot through the alley to the Parking Lot. PRESS the Emergency Escape Alarm BUTTON. . . .

ADVENTURE COMPLETED - You are now Public Enemy number 1.

ALLIED ADVENTURERS INC.

Joan G Pancott: *Apache Gold, Arnold Goes to Somewhere Else, Boggit, Brawn Free, Castle Blackstar, Classic Adventure, Dun Darach, Forest at Worlds End, Heroes of Karn, Hobbit, Jewels of Babylon, Kentilla, Message from Andromeda, Mindshadow, Mordon's Quest, Never Ending Story, Project Volcano, Qor, Seabase Delta, Seas of Blood, Smuggler's Cove, Soulks of Darkon, Spytrek, Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Very Big Cave Adventure, Warlord, Wise and Fool of Blackwood.*
78 Radipole Lane, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9RS. Telephone 0305-78415 pm.

Graham Wheeler: *After Shock, Castle Blackstar, Morden's Quest, Subsunk, Seabase Delta, Mindshadow, Never Ending Story, Hunchback The Adventure, Souls of Darkon, Fantasia Diamond, Robin of Sherwood, Ship of Doom, Inca Curse, Inca Curse, Erik The Viking, Adventure Quest, trial of Arnold, Blackwood, Arnold Goes To Somewhere Else, Wise And Fool Of Arnold Blackwood, Seas Of Blood, Nythel, Pts 1 and 2, Theseus Pts 1 and 2, Spy Trek.*

2 Burford Close, Southdown, Bath, Avon BA2 1JF.

Tyron Austin: *Dracula, The Fourth Protocol, Lord Of The Rings, The Hobbit, Price of Magik, The Worm In Paradise, Mindshadow, The Mural, Microman, Project X, Galaxias, Robin Of Sherlock, The Boggit, Kentilla, Seabase Delta, Subsunk, Spy Trek, Morden's Quest, Terrormolinos, Nythyhel, Theseus, Miami Mice, The Hermitage, Teacher Trouble, Neccis Dome, Warlock, Jewels Of Babylon, The Never Ending Story, The Vera Cruz Affair, Questprobe 3, Fantastic Four.*
13 Warner Place, Llanelli, Dyfed, South Wales SA15 3NW.
Irene Allen: *Monsters of Murdoc, Sorcerer, Jewels of Darkness, Heavy on the Magick, Fairlight* and *Dun Darach.*
15 Seventh Avenue, Garston Park, Reading, Berkshire.

Roy Alexander: *Lords of Time, Colossal Adventure, Heroes of Karn, Forest at World's End, Message from Andromeda, Subsunk* and *Gremlins* – complete. Help on *Spellbound* and *Robin of Sherwood.*
43, Denmark Rd, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2DE.

J Lycett: *Return to Eden, Emerald Isle, Jewels of Babylon, Forest at World's End, Fantasia Diamond* and *The Hobbit.*
24, Willingdon Park Drive, Hampden Park, Eastbourne, E. Sussex, BN22 OBS.

Tim Gurney: *Never Ending Story, The Hobbit, Warlord, Heroes of Karn, Forest at World's End, Jewels of Babylon, Message from Andromeda, Classic Adventure, Mordon's Quest, Classic Cave Adventure, Seabase Delta, Red Moon, Worm in Paradise, Spellbound, Knight Tyme, Wild Bunch, Colossal Cave Adventure, Adventureland, Sphinx Adventure* and *Fantasia Diamond.* Also limited help on *Dungeon Adventure, Lords of Time* and *Adventure Quest.*
Thanescroft Cottage, Lords Hill, Shamley Green, Near Guildford, Surrey GU5 0TJ.

Paul McEvoy: *Return to Eden, Red Moon, Seabase Delta, Spy Trek, Brawn Free, The Trial of Arnold Blackwood, Fantasia Diamond, Message from Andromeda* and *Never Ending Story* (pts 1, 2 and 3).
7 Clyde Avenue, Ferniegair, Hamilton, Lanarkshire ML3 7TY. Telephone; 0698 426846.

Sam Meldrum: *Fantasia Diamond.*
Whites Hill, Amersham Rd, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 2UG.

John Manifold: Rusty Blade Helpline/ GLAMDRING fanzine.
1, High St, Ulceby, South Humberside, DN39 6TG.

Sandra Sharkey: Adventure Probe Fanzine (inc. Adventure Helpline).
78 Merton Road, Highfield, Wigan WN3 6AT.

John R Barnsley: Almost everything – Amstrad based or not!
32, Herrivale Rd, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffs, ST17 9EB.

Simon Martinez: *The Lord of the Rings* (both parts 1 and 2), *The Hobbit, Knight Tyme* and *The Wild Bunch.*
2 Vernhill Close, Off Fernhill Drive, Liverpool, L8 8LB.
(PS I also have a map of the best route through the Mines of Moria in Lord of the Rings.)

Simon Davey: *Forest At World's End, Jewels Of Babylon, Message From Andromeda, Ship Of Doom* and *Espionage Island.*
22, Selkirk Street, Chaddesdon, Derby, DE2 6GL.
(Need help on *Hunchback – The Adventure* and *Knight Tyme.*)

Simon Marshall: *Lords Of Time, Heroes Of Karn, Message From Andromeda, Mindshadow, Red Moon* and *Jewels Of Babylon.*
23 Springfield Way, Stockton Lane, York, YO3 OHN. Telephone; 424008.

PLEASE always remember to send an SAE!



Richard Eddy samples the delights..

After a six month break the long-awaited (mainly by Fanzine Editors) Fanzine Explosion Part II is here. Since the last feature a few offerings have come my way, and have been dumped by the road-side, but the pick of the bunch are here! Fanzines need everybody's support – that means you, Software companies and a cheap photocopying services. Support them – grab a few!

THE BUG

"The Bug – the first ever Computer Fanzine in Britain!" says Jeffrey Davy, Bug person extraordinaire. Well, can you remember any others that were around over two years ago? *The Bug* was launched when the current editorial team felt that the nationally produced magazines only offered "Inaccurate and deceptive" reviews. Far be it from me to agree with this but *The Bug* was born. The writing was originally done on an ageing Apple IIE computer and, up until issue 10, was printed in green ink.

The team have now moved onto better things and work on a Joyce – the magazine taking an A5 format. Selling *The Bug* is done locally but they also have an extensive subscription list and have appeared at the last four Microfairs. They've had a fair bit of publicity and have even made several appearances on television programmes such as *Splash*, *Get Fresh*, *Tech Talk* and have encroached onto Cable TV's *Sky Channel*.

Then came *Rambuster* – for the Amstrad and Commodore, that survived one issue and now *The Bug* covers all three computers. It's a fat thing – running to an average of 56 pages and is released around the middle of every month. Contents include the normal games reviews (the best games are awarded a Bug Bomb) along with tips, competitions, a basic computer course, Women and Computers and a great deal more general interest articles.

The Bug's style is a very relaxed one which means you don't have to wade through pages and pages of dull unexciting text. If you want a Fanzine that has had a great deal of experience and knows what it's talking about then *The Bug* is a good place to start.

WACCI

Although *Wacci*'s Editor, Jeff Walker, dubs his magazine as a Newsletter it really falls into the Fanzine category – not only because of its look but also its content. It's produced using the *AMX Pagemaker*, despite the fact that Jeff's copy continues to crash and is generally unpleasant to him, and comes in an A4 format. *Wacci* originally started off as a Tape/Disk magazine but after he discovered more copies were being pirated than sold, he changed it to a normal paper magazine. His only problem now is ensuring that everybody buys a copy each rather than reading each others!

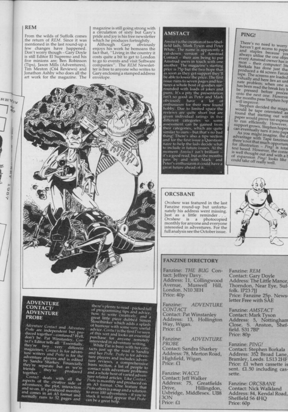
Wacci is mix of reviews, news, serious stuff and light-hearted material. The reviews cover games, books and simulations. The games reviews are co-ordinated by George Fontanini and are written with the assistance of several members of the team. The games are normally played and reviewed by one person and rather surprising, don't include any kind of rating system unlike the simulation reviews. The Technical section is written by the infinitely peculiar Auntie John. It's recorded as a Diary and although written with a lot of humour, which may appear irrelevant to the topics, it's the first time I've ever been able to understand anything about CPM!

The team consists of nine people in all, mostly contributors – one being Ex-challenger Glenn Carey who takes care of the Last Laugh column – of no vital importance but a neat way to end the magazine. If you're looking for a professionally produced and well written magazine then check out *Wacci* – it's got a lot to offer!

REM

From the wilds of Suffolk comes the return of *REM*. Since it was mentioned in the last round-up a few changes have happened. Don't worry though – Gary Doyle is still Editor El Supremo and his five minions are; Ben Robinson (Tips), Jason Mills (Adventures), Tim Meston (C64 Reviews) and Jonathon Ashby who does all the art work for the magazine. The magazine is still going strong with a circulation of sixty but Gary's pride and joy is his free newsletter which he produces fortnightly.

Although Gary obviously enjoys his work he bemoans the fact that, "Living in the country it costs quite a bit to get to London to go to events and visit Software companies". The *REM* Newsletter is free to anyone who writes to Gary enclosing a stamped address envelope.



AMSTACT

Amstact is the creation of two Sheffield lads, Mark Tyson and Peter White. The name is apparently a cut-down version of Amstrad Contact – their aim being to put Amstrad users in touch with one another. The magazine's starting price is 75p but the two hope that as soon as they get support they'll be able to lower the price. The first issue runs to seven pages and features a whole host of goodies surrounded with loads of jokes and puns. It's a pity the presentation isn't so good as Peter and Mark obviously have a lot of enthusiasm for their new found hobby. Due to limited space the reviews are quite short but are given individual ratings in five different categories so some assessment can be gained from their categories, which are quite similar to ours – but that's no bad thing! There's also a tips section and for the first issue a Questionnaire to help the lads decide what to include in future issues. At the moment *Amstact* isn't brilliant – it's a good read, but as the months pass by and with Mark and Peter's enthusiasm it could have a great future ahead of it.

PING!

There's no need to worry if you haven't got access to paper, glue and staples because you can always utilise the one object that every Amstrad owner has in common – their computer! Stephen Borkala has done just that and produced a 44 screen Fanzine on tape. The screens are loaded individually and here lies an unfortunate problem; when one screen has been read the break key has to be pressed before proceeding onto the next one. However, as the months pass Stephen hopes it will improve.

Stephen decided the magazine would be tape orientated as he found that starting out with a paper would prove too expensive to run efficiently. However, as support grows, Stephen hopes he can eventually turn it into paper.

As you might imagine, the disadvantage with Tape fanzines is there's not that much opportunity for illustration – *Ping!* is totally text based. However, the content is well thought out and with a bit of expansion *Ping!* looks like it could take off really well.

ORCSBANE

Orcsbane was featured in the last Fanzine round-up but unfortunately his address went missing. Just as a little reminder . . . *Orcsbane* is a photocopied monthly for anyone and everyone interested in adventures. For the full analysis see the October issue.

ADVENTURE CONTACT/ ADVENTURE PROBE

Adventure Contact and *Adventure Probe* are independent but produced together – confused? Well, don't be. Pat Winstanley, *Contact*'s Editor tells all: "Essentially, they're two very different magazines, *Contact* is for adventure writers and *Probe* is for the adventure players and is edited by Sandra Sharkey. Financially they're separate but as we're friends they're produced together."

Contact deals with all the aspects of the creative side of adventures, the plot, interaction and so on. It's produced monthly and comes in an A5 format and normally runs to 52 pages and there's plenty to read – packed full of programming tips and advice, how to write creatively, and a great little piece dubbed Simon Slowthinker which adds a splash of humour with some very useful advice. *Contact* is the first I've seen of this sort and looks an essential purchase for anyone remotely interested in adventure writing.

While Pat is busy with her contacts just up the road is Sandra and her *Probe*. *Probe* is for adventure players and includes adventure reviews, a comprehensive hints section, a list of people to contact with adventure problems and a whole host of varied adventure related articles. Like *Contact*, *Probe* is monthly and produced on an A5 format. One feature that *Probe* offers is a map and a solution to over 100 adventures – if you're stuck it would appear that *Probe* can be a great help.

FANZINE DIRECTORY

Fanzine: *THE BUG* Contact: Jeffrey Davy.
Address: 11, Collingwood Avenue, Muswell Hill, London. N10 3EH
Price: 40p

Fanzine: *ADVENTURE CONTACT*
Contact: Pat Winstanley
Address: 13, Hollington Way, Wigan.
Price: £1

Fanzine: *ADVENTURE PROBE*
Contact: Sandra Sharkey
Address: 78, Merton Road, Highfield, Wigan.
Price: £1

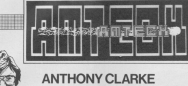
Fanzine: *WACCI*
Contact: Jeff Walker
Address: 75, Greatfields Drive, Hillingdon, Uxbridge, Middlesex. UB8 3ON
Price: £1

Fanzine: *REM*
Contact: Gary Doyle
Address: The Little Manor, Thorndon, Near Eye, Suffolk. IP23 7JJ
Price: Fanzine 25p. Newsletter Free with SAE

Fanzine: *AMSTACT*
Contact: Mark Tyson
Address: 5, Nottingham Close, S. Anston, Sheffield. S31 7BP
Price: 80p

Fanzine: *PING!*
Contact: Stephen Borkala
Address: 352 Broad Lane, Bramley, Leeds. LS13 2HF
Price: £1 when cassette is sent. £1.50 including cassette.

Fanzine: *ORCSBANE*
Contact: Nick Walkland
Address: 84, Kendal Road, Sheffield S6 4HQ
Price: 60p

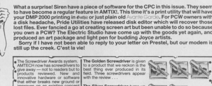




ANTHONY CLARKE

What a surprise! Siren have a piece of software for the CPC in this issue. They seem to have become a regular feature in AMTIX!. This time it's a print utility that will have your DMP 2000 printing in Gothic or just plain old Avante Garde. For PCW owners with a disk headache, Pride Utilities have released disk editor which will recover those lost files. Ever fancied a go at creating screen art but been unable to do so because you own a PCW? The Electric Studio have come up with the goods yet again, and produced an art package and light pen for budding Joyce artists.

Sorry if I have not been able to reply to your letter on Prestel, but our modem is still up the creek. C'est la vie!



The Screwdriver Awards system. AMTECH now has screwdrivers to give away — not to readers but to products reviewed. New and innovative hardware or software that either breaks new ground or improves on an existing concept is particularly likely to collect a screwdriver . . . but if we just like something a lot, we'll hand out an award.

None of your cheapo lead-alloy screwdrivers here — AMTECH only awards the best: gold, silver and bronze.

The Golden Screwdriver is given to a product that we reckon is the best thing ever produced in its field. Three screwdrivers appear with the review . . .

The Silver Screwdriver turns up in the guise of a pair of screwdrivers and indicates that the product is very good, but perhaps not terribly innovative . . .

The Bronze Screwdriver is awarded for competence in an existing field. A neat implementation of a well established idea earns a single screwdriver.



HITTING THE CHARTS WITH THE MUSIC MACHINE

What are **Sinclair Research** up to these days one might ask? Well a good deal of them have left Sir Clive's fold, and a few are now working for **RAM Electronics**, producing cheap hardware for several machines, including the good old CPC range.

Their first piece of equipment for this micro is called the *Music Machine* and comprises more than just a drum kit and sound sampler.

Once connected, the user is able to hear a simple one-channel demo, this is where inadequacies of the machine as a music maker become known. The machine has only one channel, therefore true harmonies cannot be created using the *Music Machine* on its own. The piece of music supplied as a demo has a drum line, but this can only be heard if the internal PSG (programmable sound generator) of the Amstrad is switched used. Either the drum kit (or sampled sounds, discussed later) or the 'synth' channel (but not both) may be sent through the external amplifier by the phono plug on the back of the *Music Machine* module, so the user must make a choice between a good drum kit or a good melody. Usually the drum kit is sent to the amplifier, as the internal white noise drums are pathetic. The drum kit makes use of sound sampling to re-create drum sounds accurately, and for most people they are adequate, it is when more complex drum sounds have to be used that the user will hit problems. All the drums have a static sound, that is the sampled sounds cannot be made softer or harder, depending on how the drum was hit, not very good if the machine is to be used professionally.

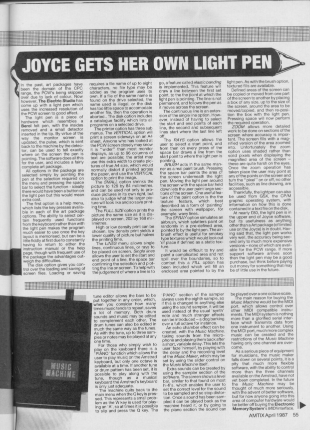
To create music the user must select the bar editor. This section allows tunes to be directly placed on staves using the cursor keys. Sharps, flats, time signature, tempo and lyrics may all be edited and inserted in this section. Editing is done in sections, with each section being given a name for later use. Although standard musical notation is used the actual notes placed on the screen are nothing more than thick lines marking where each note should be. When the bars are sent up in a form the user is happy with, they may be put together to form a tune. The

LEVEL CONTROL
MIDI THROUGH
MIDI IN
MIDI OUT
HEADPHONE SOCKET
MICROPHONE SOCKET
AUDIO OUT SOCKET

Music Machine Connector details

The Sampler

Sampler
Play
Quit
Loop
Trigger
Trigger
-36 -30 -24 -18 -12 -6 0dB +6
Sample 8
Name SYNTH
Automatic
Manual
Edit
free 431
Tune



JOYCE GETS HER OWN LIGHT PEN

In the past, art packages have been the domain of the CPC range, the PCW's being skipped over due to lack of colour. Now however, **The Electric Studio** has come up with a light pen which uses the increased resolution of the PCW screen to good effect.

The light pen is a piece of hardware which resembles a **Berol** felt pen, with the insides removed and a small detector inserted in the tip. By virtue of the way the monitor screen is updated, the pulse, which is sent back to the machine by the detector, can be used to tell exactly where on the screen the pen is pointing. The software does all this for the user, and includes a fairly complete art package.

All options in the package are selected simply by pointing the pen at the selection required on the menu and pressing the space bar to select the function - ideally there would have been a button on the light pen but this would mean extra cost.

The first option is a help menu, which lists the key presses available in each of the art package options. The ability to select certain frequently used functions from the keyboard rather than with the light pen makes the program much easier to use once the key layout is memorised, but can be a little fiddly at first due to constantly having to return to either the instruction manual or the help page, though with frequent use of the package the advantages outweigh the difficulties.

The disk option gives you control over the loading and saving of screen files. Loading or saving requires a file name of up to eight characters, no file type may be added as the program uses its own. If a file of the same name is found on the drive selected, the name used is illegal, or the disk has too little space to accomodate another file, then the operation is aborted.. The disk option includes a catalogue facility which lists all programs on a selected drive.

The printer option has three sub menus. The *VERTICAL* option will print a screen sideways on an A4 sheet. Anyone who has looked at the PCW screen closely may know it is "wider" than most monitor displays, as up to 96 columns of text are possible; the artist may use this extra width to create pictures of true A4 size, which would normally distort if printed across the paper, and use the *VERTICAL* option to print the image.

The *SMALL* option shrinks the picture to 126 by 84 millimetres, and can be used not only to produce pictures in its own right, but also to judge what the larger picture will look like and so save printing time.

The *FULL SIZE* option prints the picture the same size as it is displayed on screen, 202 by 168 millimetres.

High or low density print can be chosen, low density print yields a lower quality of picture but halves the printing time.

The *LINES* menu allows single lines, continuous lines, or rays to be placed on screen. *Single lines* allows the user to set the start and end point of a line, the space bar confirming the selection and plotting the line on screen. To help with the judgement of where a line is to go, a feature called *elastic banding* is implemented. This feature will draw a line between the first set point, to the the point at which the light pen is pointing. The line is not permanent, and follows the pen as it moves across the screen.

The continuous line is an extension of the single line option. However, instead of having to select the start and end points of each line, the second and subsequent lines start where the last line left off.

The *RAYS* option allows the user to select a start point, and from then on every press of the space bar draws a line from the start point to where the light pen is pointing.

BRUSH acts in the same manner as a real paint brush. Pressing the space bar paints the area cf the screen underneath the light pen. Moving the light pen around the screen with the space bar held down lets the user paint large sections of the screen. One useful feature of the paint option is the the texture feature, which best described as a form of 'painting' the screen with wallpaper, for example, wavy lines.

The *SPRAY* option simulates an airbrush, which splatters paint on randomly in a pre-defined area, pointed to by the light pen. The airbrush effect is useful for smokey type textures which would look out 'of place if defined as a static texture.

It would be difficult to try and paint a complicated area and not spill over the boundaries, so to combat this a *FILL* option has been included which will fill an enclosed area pointed to by the light pen. As with the brush option, textured fills are available.

Defined areas of the screen can be copied or moved from one part of the screen to another by placing a box of any size, up to the size of the screen, around the area to be moved/copied, and then re-position the box with the light pen. Pressing space will now perform the required operation.

ZOOM allows more detailed work to be done on sections of the screen where accuracy is important. The screen fills with a magnified version of the area zoomed into. Unfortunately the zoom option uses shaded rather than solid pixels when displaying the magnified area of the screen – these are quite harsh on the eyes. Once the zoom operation has taken place the user may point at any of the points on the screen and turn the "pixel" on or off, no other facilities, such as line drawing, are accessible.

Thankfully, the lightpen can also be used from GSX, the CP/M graphic operating system, with information on how this is done contained in a text file on the disk.

At nearly £80, the light pen is in the upper end of Joyce software, but its usefulness as anything other than a Art package (of limited use on the Joyce) is in doubt. Having said that, the light pen works very well, the accuracy being second only to much more expensive versions – none of which are available for the PCW range. If more support software arrives soon then the light pen may be a good purchase, but think before paying out money for something that may be of little use in the future.

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tune editor allows the bars to be put together in any order, which, when you consider how many times music tends to repeat, saves a lot of memory. Both drum sounds and music may be edited to complement each other. The drum tunes can also be edited in much the same way as the tunes. As with the tune, up to three samples or notes may be played at any one time.

For those who simply wish to play on the keyboard there is a 'PIANO' function which allows the user to play music on the Amstrad keyboard, but only one octave is available at a time. If another tune or drum pattern has been set, it is possible to play along with the tune, though as a musical keyboard the Amstrad's keyboard is only just adequate.

The machine quits back to the main menu when the Q key is pressed. This represents a small problem as the W key is used for playing an 'A', so at times it is possible to slip and press the Q key. The 'PIANO' section of the sampler always uses the eighth sample, so if this is changed to anything else using the sound sampler, it will be used instead of the usual 'synth' note and much stranger effects can be introduced – a dog barking over a full octave for instance.

An echo chamber effect can be created, with the *Music Machine*, taking sounds from the microphone and playing them back after a short, variable delay. This lets the user 'faze' himself, by playing with the delay and the recording level of the *Music Maker*, which may be set by using the slider control on the *Music Machine* itself.

Extra sounds can be created by using the sampler section of the software. The screen shows a level bar, similar to that found on most hi-fi's, which enables the user to set the correct level for the sound to be sampled and so stop distortion. Once a sound has been sampled it can be played back as the machine heard it, or by going to the piano section the sound can be played over a one octave scale.

The main reason for buying the *Music Machine* would be the MIDI port, which allows control over other MIDI compatible instruments. The MIDI system is nothing more than a glorified serial interface which transmits data from one instrument to another. Using the MIDI port, much more complex music can be created and the restrictions of the *Music Machine* having only one channel are overcome.

As a serious piece of equipment for musicians, the music maker falls down on several points, it is a pity that much more flexible software, with the ability to control more than the three channels available on the Amstrad, have not yet been completed. In the future the *Music Machine* may be thought of much more seriously, with the advent of better software, but for now anyone going into this area of computer hardware would be better off buying the **Electronic Memory System**'s *MIDI* interface.

THIS SUPERB PROGRAM FOR ANY AMSTRAD CPC464, 664 OR 6128 ENABLES YOU TO REALLY MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR PRINTER.

THE FILE PRINTER ALLOWS ANY ASCII FILE FROM A WORD PROCESSOR TO BE PRINTED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS.

3 DIFFERENT TEXT SIZES ARE ALLOWED. THIS IS SIZE 1.

0 THIS IS SIZE 0. THE BIGGEST!

BESIDES THE 11 FONTS THAT COME WITH PRINT MASTER, THE FONT DESIGNER ALLOWS YOU TO QUICKLY AND EASILY CREATE YOUR OWN FONTS.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE FORM OF SMALL SCREEN DUMPS CAN ALSO BE INCLUDED TO ACCOMPANY YOUR TEXT.

PRINT MASTER ALSO COMES COMPLETE WITH A PRINTER UTILITY PROGRAM IN THE FORM OF A PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS YOU CREATE A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT SCREEN DUMPS. A 16 SHADE MODE 0 DUMP, BLACK & WHITE DUMPS AND A CHARACTER DUMP ARE AVAILABLE ALONG WITH A 16K INTERRUPT DRIVEN PRINTER BUFFER. IF ALL THAT IS NOT IMPRESSIVE, THE ABILITY TO PRINT IN THE DIFFERENT FONTS IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM BASIC.

THE EASY TO USE FONT DESIGNER COMPLETES THE PACKAGE. THIS UTILITY ENABLES YOU TO ALTER THE EXISTING FONTS OR DESIGN YOUR OWN FROM SCRATCH.
THE FONTS ON THE DISC INCLUDE:- CHICAGO, CITY, COUNTDOWN, FLASH, GOTHIC, HELVETIC, IMPRINT, PEIGNOT, STANDARD, STENCIL.
AS IS UNDERLINING

A PRINT UTILITY FROM SIREN SOFTWARE

Siren Software have turned their attention away from their usual back-up utilities, and have now released a print utility for the CPC range and any Epson compatible printer.

Print Master comes as a suite of four programs and 11 different fonts and the facility to create more.

The first program is an ASCII print dump, which will print out any standard ASCII file, such as that from a word-processor, and handles any of the extra codes not normally found on a standard Epson printer. If any of the extra fonts are to be used then the program automatically reads in the font required and continues printing the file. So as not to confuse the *Print Master* codes with those used by the printer, the new printer codes take the form of pseudo bar commands. For example, if part of the text were to be printed in a Gothic type face and then changed back to the standard type face used by the printer then a command sequence such as the one below would be used:-

IFONT GOTHIC

This piece of text will now be printed in Gothic Style

IFONT STANDARD

While the program is running, the disk has to be left in the drive so that the extra fonts can be loaded into memory when they are required.

All the functions, such as underlining, double width characters, and extra fonts, are accessed in this way, though the standard codes will also have an effect, so care must be taken not to confuse codes and upset the normal running of the printer.

The second program is a font designer, which lets the user edit any of the supplied fonts, or create their own special fonts. Unlike the normal fonts which consists of dots on a matrix of seven by five dots, the next fonts are designed on a matrix of sixteen by fourteen pixels. This gives a much greater definition when the character is printed, but uses two lines on the printer and so only half the normal amount of text can be placed on one sheet of paper. Fonts are designed on screen, one character at a time, using a large box in which a cursor can be moved around using the cursor keys, pressing the COPY key toggles a pixel on or off. Once a character set has ben designed it can be saved under any name as a new font. To use it within a piece of text the user need only put a

IFONT new-font-name

command to use it

The PRINT program adds four new commands to BASIC. The first is LPRINT, which will print the text string, which follows the command, in any of the selected fonts, which must be loaded separately by entering, **LOAD "*type-face x*",&9400**. It is a pity that a command was not supplied which loaded the required font for you in the correct memory location, though after a few goes the font loading operation becomes second nature.

The SIZE command changes the size of the text when the LPRINT command is used. Text is always the same height when printed, but the SIZE command changes the width to any of three sizes, which correspond to the sizes of text on the mode 0,1 and 2 screens respectively.

INVERT toggles the printer between normal and inverted text, so it is important to remember whether the INVERT option is on or off.

Finally the UNLINE command toggles between underlined and non-underlined text, following the same format as the INVERT command.

The most useful suite of commands comes in the UTIL program. The normal screen and graphic printer dumps are available, but what is more useful is the 16k Printer buffer. This program runs under interrupt, and continues to print out any data sent to the printer ¬ while allowing the program to continue running as normal. If the user has a 6128, an extra bank of memory is used to store the text, while the 464/664 users are restricted as a 16k area of memory is gobbled up.

Print Master is yet another good piece of software from Siren, which although nothing really special, is still a cheap way to create those extra fonts required for a special document or decoration. At £12.95 it is much cheaper than most other Siren disk-only utilities. Siren once again pick up a **Bronze Screwdriver Award**.

PCW DISK MANAGEMENT SAM STYLE!

Pride Utilities have long produced software for the CPCs, now they have turned their attention to the PCW with *SAM*, a disk management system.

The directory editor allows direct manipulation of the directory. Files can be erased or recovered if they are accidentally erased; they may be set to system or DIR to hide or show them to the directory when DIR is entered at the CP/M prompt. The user numbers of the files may be changed, along with the soft write protect setting so that files cannot be erased by accident. Renaming files is also a simple process but the program will only allow valid names to be used, ruling out the possibility of protecting programs by giving them names that the system would not normally accept.

SAM also has the ability to edit the 256 possible directory entries on drive B, and manipulate them in much the same way as with drive A, the major difference being there are 8 pages of the directory to skim through and a larger number of possible user directories.

Many directory editors are long winded when it comes to deprotecting all files on a disk. *SAM* has a ZAP direct command which sets all the files on the disk to read/write, DIR and all the user values to zero.

A file scrambler is included to protect text files of a secure nature from simply being read into a wordprocessor and examined or directly read by using the TYPE command. The scrambler asks for a password which is used to encode a file and the name of the file to be protected. It then sets to work reading in a file and saving it back out in its scrambled form. It is important the password be remembered or the file will be lost forever. Unlike the other options the scrambler must first be installed into the system before it can be called by the main program; this means that it is almost impossible to scramble a file by accident. If the user doesn't wish to instal the program first he can simply use the default password of **PRIDE** when unscrambling files.

A speed disk option is included which increases disk access by 30%, this feature is then made permanent until the system is either rebooted or switched off.

A fast formatter is included to speed up the operation of formatting disks. Only Data format is available, so anyone wishing to make a boot disk will have to go back to using CP/M.

For certain operations the programmer may wish the screen to be inverted, usually for better clarity of display in a well lit environment. The *Invert Background* option does just that, but any program which sets the foreground and background itself may revert the system back to normal.

SAM costs £19.95 and seems to do everything the **Siren disk enhancement** package does, and a little more, but with the exception of the *COPYFILE* command. Even so it still represents the best disk management system for the PCW machines at the moment and so picks up a **BRONZE SCREWDRIVER AWARD**.



FEUD

Bulldog, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Life in Little Dullford had always been a simple one. Country folk minding their own business until one day strange things started happening. Two strange people reside in that small village – Learic and Leanoric – wizards. They were fond of arguing with each other and after a heavy session Leanoric turned Learic into a frog. However, before the week was out he was back to being a wizard again. But life was never the same in that small, secluded village . . . The *Feud* had begun.

Although the game itself is quite a simple idea, a collect it, maze game, FEUD is a delight to play. The graphics are well animated and colourful, and the movement of the main character is fast enough to keep the player interested in the game. The sound is one of David Whittaker's better tunes, even if it is a little repetitive. Overall, FEUD can't really be faulted on any count, a great budget game that I would buy, even at a slightly higher price.

From now on the two would continually be at each others throats, one trying to outdo the other.

The player assumes the role of Learic as he attempts to win supremacy over Leanoric. The action is set in the village and its surrounding countryside which forms a large flick-screen maze. As Learic your first objective is to collect spells to build up your armoury. There are 12 spells altogether and include several kinds: destructive – fireball, lightning and sprites; useful – teleport, protect, swift, invisible and heal; and general spells which range from turning villagers into Zombies to doppleganging. Villagers are stupid, but strong willed and can not be commanded. However, when in a Zombie state, they may walk in the direction you indicate but don't leave their territory.

Spells are made up of two ingredients which can be found scattered throughout the maze. They usually take the shape of plants or herbs but occasionally items such as bones and Devilsbit need to be collected for spells on the blacker side of magic. The Spell Books is shown at the bottom of the screen – its pages inform the user on which ingredients are required to concoct the potions. When the ingredients for a spell have been collected Learic must return to his cauldron to mix the potion. A spell is then added to his collection and can be used when needed by pressing the fire button – but the spell book has to be on the correct page.

While you're helping Learic to fill his spell book Leanoric is attempting to do the same thing – he's out to eliminate you.

The graphics in FEUD are a delight to behold with very well animated characters and pretty, colourful scenery – especially the trees and village huts. Although it is along an old theme it is very well presented and the layout of the mazes is cleverly designed so as to make the playing area look large. I don't think it will have a lasting appeal as once the whereabouts of the various spell ingredients are firmly imprinted on the mind it proves a doddle to whip round and collect them all. An impressive looking game but with limited gameplay.

At the bottom of the screen is a compass indicating where Leanoric is so he can be found easily if necessary. Beside the compass are two figures that slowly sink into the ground representing the energy status of Learic and Leanoric. The feud ends when either of the Wizards are eliminated . . . There can be only one victor.

Maze games are nothing new, but FEUD offers a great challenge. It's probably worthless playing without first drawing a map, as the playing area appears so large. Once you've got the locations under control you can then begin to get to work on killing the opposition. I didn't find this an easy task, as my opponent appeared to know where the ingredients were better than I did. Colour is very well used, making all the screens bright and enjoyable to play through. Unfortunately, the movement is a bit slow on the main character – well, until you discover the 'go faster' spell. For £1.99 it's a worthy buy for it's sheer entertainment value.

Presentation 82%
Good instructions on and off screen.

Graphics 79%
Colour is used well and adds an extra sparkle to the game.

Sound 88%
Brilliant tune plays continuously.

Playability 78%
May take some time to realise the various routes through the maze.

Addictive Qualities 73%
Easily hookable but may wear off in time.

Value for money 82%
You could pay a great deal more for this sort of game.

Overall 80%
A really good maze/arcade game.

A REALLY ACA

(You gotta be cle

50 Copies of CRL's game, ACADE

here for the taking!

ACADEMIC COMP!

(clever!)

ACADEMY

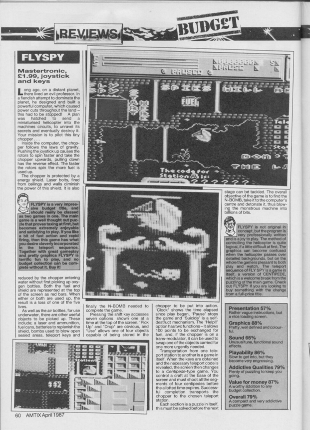


In one of this month's amazing ACCOLADE you take the role of a SKIMMER PILOT as he enters the ACADEMY, which was set up to train pilots after the disaster on the planet CYGNUS. *Academy* is the great follow-up to PETE COOKE's brilliant TAU CETI, and has been causing havoc in the Towers as every one wants to play it. It's packed with a grand total of 20 different MISSIONS, designed to test your skill and judgement as a prospective Skimmer pilot. GALCORP, the galactic corporation, have provided you with three different skimmers: LINCON, WILSON and the Lenin. However, if desired, you may construct you own Skimmer to suit your needs. Additional LASERs and all sorts of junk can be fitted before finally LAUNCHing into the black void that is outer space.

To win a copy of this amazing game simply find all the words marked in capital letters in the text in the wordsquare and post your entries off to . . .

THE I'M REALLY ACADEMIC COMP, AMTIX!, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire. SY8 1DB. To arrive no later than the 3rd of April. Good hunting!

C	I	M	C	P	N	M	N	L	V	K	X
I	G	A	L	C	O	R	P	E	T	R	E
N	N	O	C	M	I	L	B	T	O	W	S
O	I	A	N	O	S	L	I	W	V	C	R
E	N	L	A	S	S	E	E	K	O	O	C
D	E	D	I	S	I	Y	T	U	Y	K	Y
A	L	S	K	I	M	M	E	R	T	K	G
L	L	A	S	E	R	S	P	Z	A	E	N
O	T	A	D	L	B	W	S	E	Q	P	U
C	D	A	S	C	D	G	L	C	I	J	S
C	C	E	U	U	X	L	A	U	N	C	H
A	E	F	Y	C	R	D	S	F	K	O	Q
F	O	D	A	Z	E	S	T	J	L	I	N
C	M	B	G	T	H	T	H	E	L	L	O
M	U	M	E	J	F	K	I	G	L	V	M



FLYSPY

Mastertronic, £1.99, joystick and keys

Long ago, on a distant planet, there lived an evil professor. In a fiendish attempt to dominate the planet, he designed and built a powerful computer, which caused power cuts throughout the land – this had to be stopped! A plan was hatched to send a miniaturised helicopter into the machines circuits, to unravel its secrets and eventually destroy it. Your mission is to pilot this tiny chopper . . .

Inside the computer, the chopper follows the laws of gravity. Pushing the joystick up causes the rotors to spin faster and take the chopper upwards, pulling down has the reverse effect. The faster the rotors spin the more fuel is used up.

The chopper is protected by a energy shield. Laser bolts, fired from ceilings and walls diminish the power of this shield. It is also reduced by the chopper entering water without first picking up oxygen bottles. Both the fuel and shield are represented at the top of the screen as red bars. When either or both are used up, the result is a loss of one of the five lives.

FLYSPY is a very impressive budget title, and should really be classed as two games in one. The main game is a well thought out puzzle that proves taxing at first, but becomes extremely enjoyable and satisfying to play. If you like a bit of fast action and rapid firing, then this game has what you desire cleverly incorporated in the teleport sequence. Together with great gameplay and pretty graphics FLYSPY is terrific fun to play, and no budget collection can be complete without it. Buy it!

As well as the air bottles, for use underwater, there are other useful objects to be picked up. These include; a laser and ammunition, fuel cans, batteries to replenish the shield, bombs used to blow open sealed areas, teleport keys and finally the N-BOMB needed to complete the game.

Pressing the shift key accesses seven options shown one at a time at the top of the screen. 'Pick Up' and 'Drop' are obvious, and 'Use' allows one of four objects capable of being stored in the chopper to be put into action. 'Clock' shows the time elapsed since play began, 'Pause' stops the game and 'Suicide' is a self-destruct mechanism. The 'Help!!' option has two functions – it allows 100 points to be exchanged for fuel, and, if the chopper is on a trans-modulator, it can be used to swap one of the objects carried for one more urgently needed.

Transportation from one teleport station to another is a game in itself. When the keys are obtained and the necessary teleport code is revealed, the screen then changes to a *Centipede*-type game. You control a craft at the base of the screen and must shoot all the segments of four centipedes before the allotted time expires. Successful completion transports the chopper to the chosen teleport station.

Each section is a puzzle in itself, this must be solved before the next stage can be tackled. The overall objective of the game is to find the N-BOMB, take it to the computer's centre and detonate it, thus blowing the monstrous machine into billions of bits.

FLYSPY is not original in concept, but the program is very professionally written and is a joy to play. The method of controlling the helicopter is quite logical, if a little difficult at first. The graphics can become confused when the helicopter passes over detailed backgrounds, but on the whole the game is pleasant to both play and watch. The teleport sequence of FLY SPY is a game in itself, a version of CENTIPEDE, which is a welcome break from the puzzling of the main game. Check out FLYSPY if you are looking to buy something with the change from a full-price title.

Presentation 57%
Rather vague instructions, but a nice loading screen.

Graphics 88%
Pretty, well defined and colourful.

Sound 65%
Unusual tune, functional sound effects.

Playability 86%
Slow to get into, but they become very engrossing.

Addictive Qualities 79%
Plenty of puzzling to keep you going.

Value for money 87%
A worthy addition to any budget collection.

Overall 79%
A compact and very addictive puzzle game.

NINJA

Mastertronic, £1.99, joystick or keys

Mastertronic's latest release is yet another of those martial arts orientated bash'em ups that prove so popular nowadays. The unknown hooded ninja must do battle with many an oriental adversary in order to save Princess Di-Di held captive in the Palace of Pearls.

Each of the seven ground floor screens has one opponent to dispose of. All are accessed by the use of the fire button and directional joystick movements and the ninja can perform three kicks (high, body and low) and two punches (low and jump and punch). As well as hand to hand combat the ninja's trusty Samurai sword can be swung into action again by depressing the fire button and joystick movements. Movement left, right up and down is achieved by appropriately directing the joystick without the use of the fire button.

Strewn across the floors are death stars and throwing daggers which can be picked up and launched at the enemy with lethal precision.

Higher levels are reached by leaping up through holes in the ceiling – simply position the ninja underneath the hole and push up on the joystick. On each successive level reached the number of enemy ninjas on any one screen increases by one – on the second level there are two opponents on screen, on the third there are three and so on.

At the base of each screen there is a red bar beneath the word ninja' indicating the energy remaining for the main character. The bar will decrease with each blow received until it is no more at which time the brave ninja dies. Similarly each opponent faced has an energy bar. On screens with more than two enemies only the nearest have bars – when one is killed another will approach and his bar will appear.

Energy can be replenished by walking into glowing yellow idols dropped on random screens by the Princess.

Graphically, NINJA is fine with well defined characters and animation and some nice, colourful backgrounds. Unfortunately the game has no tune and the sound effects are somewhat weak. After a while the gameplay seems to suffer through the lack of change in the opposition and, although your character can perform a varied selection of attacking moves, only a few are needed to dispose of the nasty ninjas. Having said that it is well worth a look at, if only to stock up on your budget games.

NINJA is another of those average games which cannot be faulted on graphics, sound or gameplay, but don't have the staying power to keep the player interested for long. After a few games the task becomes quite easy and very repetitive. For a couple of quid it is not a bad buy, but there are better budget games on the market.

Presentation 62%
Plain loading screen, few but complete options.

Graphics 67%
Nice colourful backgrounds, relatively smooth character movements.

Sound 35%
Unimaginative white noise effects.

Playability 65%
Easy to play after a couple of games, though still a challenge in the later screens.

Addictive Qualities 45%
A five game wonder, which may have you coming back some time in the future.

Value for money 60%
The right price for product of this quality.

Overall 58%
A tacky but presentable martial arts simulation.

COLLAPSE

Firebird Silver, £1.99, joystick or keys

The hero of *Collapse* is Zen – a strange creature who has a destructive nature and insists on knocking down any construction that he may come across. So, imagine his joy when he stumbles across 96 screens of organised structures – he just can't resist the temptation to collapse them all.

All the screens consist of a network of grey sticks and stripy bridges connected by pins and each one act as a separate puzzle that has to be solved before proceeding further.

Zen has two modes of operation – magic mode (Zen turns red) and yellow belly mode (Zen remains yellow). In magic mode Zen can walk in mid-air and cast magic spells and it's only when he is in magic mode that the construction can be finally knocked down. Before Zen can actually blast the structure the sticks must be worked loose – done simply, in yellow belly mode, by walking over them. When enough sticks have been turned blue, Zen can stick his Rotix in action – but he must be in magic mode first. The Rotix works its way around all the adjacent blue sticks – it can be set off at any time providing there is a blue stick next to it.

Some of the sticks may appear difficult, if not impossible, to reach. For this Zen is armed with a collection of stripy bridges that can be laid down to provide platforms for walking on. Zen also has the ability to cast spells which prove a great help when dealing with the nasties that are out to kill him.

Zen is always racing against the clock as every construction should be collapsed within its preset time limit. To make things worse colliding with a nastie knocks a further 100 units off the counter. Randomly appearing jewels provide extra time units to boost the time limit which is constantly decreasing all the while . . .

COLLAPSE didn't appeal to me. Although the game is executed well, the addictiveness of the game tends to wane after a few games. The controls are not hard to master but are awkward to select. If a few more features could be introduced and the overall speed of the game increased then maybe I would give COLLAPSE a little more time, but as it is the game is boring.

Don't be fooled by the bland appearance of COLLAPSE, underneath that jerky animation lies a game which is really appealing to me. A great mix of fanatical action with a bit of puzzling thrown in for good measure. It literally had me screaming and shouting as the timer counted down and there was only *one* stick left to get! With this sort of game it's not the graphics that make the game, as they're not particularly outstanding, but it's the addictiveness that makes COLLAPSE rate high in my games list.

Presentation 68%
Good attract mode and demo.

Graphics 57%
Sufficiently good but tends to flicker.

Sound 51%
Essential squeaks and bleeps.

Playability 66%
Difficult to begin with until controls are mastered.

Addictive Qualities 75%
Infuriatingly addictive.

Value for money 70%
For the sheer fun it's well worth £2.

Overall 69%
A highly compulsive budget game.

HOLLYWOOD OR BUST

Mastertronic, £1.99, joystick only

Let's go to *Hollywood or Bust* take two, cue the lights, camera, action!

Take a trip down memory lane, back to the roaring twenties, to the sound of the Charleston and the excitement of the early, madcap flicks.

Hollywood or Bust is an arcade adventure set in an early film studio in which the hero, actor Buster Báloney, scampers around searching for five hidden Oscars. As play begins the the screen is split into two, the top being the playing area and the bottom the status window with the director eagerly awaiting the action to begin. Buster must make his way along the right to left scrolling road and up the ladder into the first studio set. Once inside he can begin the search for the Oscars.

Mastertronic have set a great standard for budget software, usually better than full price games, but this one is just dire. The graphics are small, badly animated and flicker on the chase screen. The sound was also a disappointment, a single channel of sound trying to sound like several, and doesn't work well with the game. Overall HOLLYWOOD OR BUST is a boring concept, which has been badly implemented.

The set is littered with doors and passages – some take Buster further into the set, while others lead him out onto the street. The action then switches to a full screen overhead view, which plunges Buster into the midst of a mass Keystone Cop custard pie fight, which he must survive until

An actor's life is not easy, and Buster is constantly harassed by what seems to be a member of the Keystone Cops. The only way to combat him is with the traditional custard pie which disorientates him long enough for Buster to make a quick stage exit. If that wasn't enough, the studio is haunted by the ghost of a 'has been' actor who attempts to foil our hero's climb to fame. Luckily the apparition is a bit of a coward, and can only stop Buster from behind – so placing Buster's back firmly against a wall will render him safe.

This latest offering from Mastertronic totally failed to impress me. The graphics on the main screen, although colourful in places, make the whole aspect of the game become blurred and ill defined. The street sequence, supposedly from a bird's eye view, shows a lot of flickering side on view cops sliding along and seems to be a total waste of time adding neither interest nor excitement. A poor game, even at this price it's hardly worth the money asked.

1000 shots have been taken. If his supply of pies runs out before time he can restock by moving to a tap in the top left of the screen and collecting the custard form the bottom right. Buster is only mortal, so if he is struck too many times by the cops there will be two ghosts in the studio.

THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

Presentation 35%
Horrible loading screen, minimal instructions.

Graphics 49%
Slow and flickery.

Sound 25%
Weak repetitive tune.

Playability 32%
Slow, unexciting and rather boring.

Addictive Qualities 30%
Lack of action makes it a non-starter.

Value for money 27%
Cheap and bordering on nasty.

Overall 31%
A poor unexciting and repetitive game.

CLASSIC MUNCHER

Bubble Bus Software, £1.99,joystick or keys

Bubble Bus Software's latest release is a bit of a blast from the past, as it has a surprising similarity to the age old arcade favourite *Pacman*. Hang on . . . it is *Pacman*.

CLASSIC MUNCHER is just that, a classic version of PACMAN and nothing more. Having said that it is a fairly competent version that should have the kids playing way into the night, after all, the best players have always been nine year olds. CLASSIC MUNCHER does have a few drawbacks, the main one being the difference in gameplay from the original, but for two quid it's a great little game.

There are infinite levels, with each having six unique screens, through which the little chomping character under your control must be guided. To progress to the next three lives to be lost in total. To help combat the nasties larger dots can be found which when eaten send the nasties into a frenzy as they themselves can now be gobbled up by you – unfortunately this only lasts a short while. Once a meanie is eaten his spirit, in the form of two white dots, quickly returns to the 'home' square in the centre of the screen. It then reforms, and the relentless pursuit commences yet again.

Letters forming the words 'EXTRA' or 'BONUS' may appear on screen. The letters themselves are worth 100 points but if all the letters forming the whole word are collected then either an extra life or bonus points are awarded. 100 points may also be gained by collecting any item of fruit that appears on screen. Each little dot is worth 10 points, the larger dots 100 points and devouring a nasty is also worth 100 points. Your score, lives remaining, and fruit or letters collected, are all shown at the top of the screen.

When all six screens are completed then it's up a level and back to the first screen but this time you'll find the nasties move much quicker.





screen, all of the dots strewn across the passages have to be picked up – by simply moving onto them.

Chasing you around the screen are four little nasties that prove fatal if encountered – there are

Well, what can I say? PACMAN was always one of my favourites in the arcades years ago and here it is under the title of CLASSIC MUNCHER. The graphics are colourful, well defined and move smoothly and swiftly. The sound effects are good, and give the game plenty of atmosphere – *and* there are also a couple of dinky tunes. A fun budget game that I still enjoy playing, and probably always will.

Presentation 75%
Plain loading screen, nice demo.

Graphics 61%
Well defined, characters move smoothly.

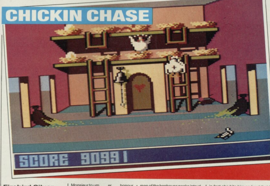
Sound 72%
Two nice tunes, atmospheric FX.

Playability 83%
Simple to get into, first level easily completed.

Addictive Qualities 67%
If you loved Pacman then you'll like this.

Value for Money 69%
Two quid's not bad for an old classic.

Overall 73%
A classic version of Pacman.



Firebird Silver, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

If you ever thought that chickens have an easy time then think again. **Firebird**'s latest 'cheep' offering tells the romantic story of two love-crazy Chickens – Monsieur and Madame Chickin. It is the beginning of the mating season, the time of year when every brace of newly-wed Chickens traditionally 'come together' to make babies!

It seems that bad taste now rules the roost. Controlling your character is simple, and easy to get used to. The graphics are nicely animated and move very quickly without flickering. The game itself can be quite enjoyable and one to come back to on rainy days, but don't expect it to hold your attention for more than ten minutes at a time.

The action takes place in a henhouse, connected to the outside world by two open doors. Madame Chickin's chamber in the centre and two shelves with ten nesting boxes above the floor.

The player takes control of Monsieur Chicken. His loved one is sitting patiently in her little love nest, behind a closed door, waiting for Monsieur to um . . . er . . . honour her requests. At the start of each game, Monsieur Chickin nips in to pay her a visit. Madame appears on screen when she feels contented. Climbing one of the two ladders to the nesting shelves, she lays an egg in one of the nests before returning to her love-hut.

When Madame is aaah . . . assisted, a small heart appears at the top of the screen. The longer Monsieur remains with her the more hearts appear and so more eggs are laid.

There are bound to be a few egg-eating visitors in search of lunch, so as well as keeping Madame happy and the nests full, Monsieur also has the responsibility of keeping the intruders at bay. Beak specially sharpened, the man of the henhouse pecks intruders until they scurry off.

A cheeky little game that is great fun to play. The graphics are nothing special, but simplicity is its great beauty. A single screen game, simple in concept, that has you glued to your Amstrad, that is until the initial naughtiness of the game wears off. Taken in retrospect, CHICKIN CHASE is very repetitive, but I don't think anyone noticed as the further you get into it the more hectic things become. Initially a very witty game that tends to become monotonous after huge scores are amassed.

The egg snatchers come in several forms. They range from Monsieur Hedgehog (a slow and dim witted creature) to Mademoiselle Slimy the snake (quick and slick at stealing the eggs). Even while this is going on, Monsieur Chickin must continue to return to the love-hut to help Madame produce more eggs.

A sensitive subject maybe, but it's incredible fun to play. This is how games used to be – one screen action with infuriating gameplay. It's like a never ending story – get the eggs laid, make some more, protect them, and allow Madame to lay some more before the last lot disappear . . . and so it goes on. It can get frustrating at times, especially when the snakes make a run for the eggs as there's hardly any time to stop them. CHICKIN CHASE is well worth taking a peek at.

The objective is simple – keep producing eggs that eventually hatch into fluffy little chicks and stroll out into the world. However, if Monsieur allows all the eggs in the nesting boxes to be swiped, or to grow up into baby chicks Madame emerges from her love-hut and bashes the poor Cockerel over the head with her rolling pin – in fact she hits him so hard that it costs him one of his three lives.

As you might imagine, his continuous romantic visits to Madame's chamber tire the poor husband out. This 'eggs-ertion' slows Monsieur down somewhat, making intruders harder to expel. Luckily, there are two discarded bags of corn from which Monsieur can build up his energy, pecking up worms also increase his energy level. The game continues until Monsieur has lost all his lives or, more simply, just had 'un oeuf' . . . Sorry.

Presentation 70%
Amusing title screen – generally good.

Graphics 78%
Simple but very effective and humorous.

Sound 60%
A few well placed jingles and tunes.

Playability 85%
Excellent – easy to control and no confusion with regard to what is happening.

Addictive Qualities 80%
It's tempting to have one more go, but some may find it repetitive.

Value for money 84%
Great game, great price.

Overall 79%
An enjoyable and addictive game well worth two quid.

SHORT CIRCUIT

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

This game is a tie-in with one of the latest films to come over from America. *Short Circuit* features the biggest, cutest rival to R2D2 yet – Number Five. Number Five is no ordinary robot – well, he was, until a freak bolt of lightning struck him and raised the output of his logical circuitry towards the level of human consciousness. He is 'alive' – and prefers it that way. Unfortunately, The Nova Corporation's scientists – who created this robotic oddity – want to pull Number Five apart, diode by diode, to discover how his artificial intelligence circuits have been able to assume human qualities.

The game begins in the Nova Robotics building from which Number Five desperately wants to escape. Before he can do a runner, a few items must be collected to enable him to add the powers of firing a laser and jumping to his basic repertoire of trundling around.

The factory complex consists of 24 rooms that are displayed in isometric perspective, with the player looking from the front inwards – three of the four walls of the current room are in view. Number Five knows that to escape he has to log-on to the Nova computer and download some routines – luckily, the Nova Computer is situated very near the first location. A computer printer in the status area gives reports on the outcome of Number Five's activities during play. Two bar meters reveal the status of Number Five's laser and the general condition of his mechanical frame.

Logging on to the Nova computer gives the robo-hero access to three program routines that can be downloaded: Search, Laser and Jump. Search is the most vital as this enables Five to examine desks, cupboards, coat racks – anything in the factory where something useful might be hidden. Only three routines can be stored at any one time – including the inbuilt link program that allows Five to interface with the factory computer. Desk terminals found in the offices can be a useful source of downloadable software.

Some connecting doors that link rooms are locked, while others need a security pass to be presented before granting access to high security areas. Finding keys and passes is high on Number Five's agenda of things to do . . .

The factory exit is located at the

△ *Oh dear. Number Five left the factory without collecting all the items he needed. Good job there's a cheat mode . . .*

■ Mapping the factory seems to be the logical approach to SHORT CIRCUIT, and once a map is to hand there shouldn't be many problems to completing this section every time. That is not to say that it will be easy, as there are some sneaky puzzles such as the robot that follows your every move. A fair bit of thought is required . . . On the other hand, the second part is far less taxing, but verges on the frustrating – especially when you have to jump the robot onto bits of land surrounded by water – one little slip and you're sunk. Graphically, SHORT CIRCUIT is very impressive with good animation and definition, and a great deal of attention has been paid to background scenery. A very nice combination-game that shouldn't be missed.

Mass

■ SHORT CIRCUIT has something for everyone – an arcade adventure and an action game; and the best part of it is that you can play either part when you want to, without the problem of completing one section first. Providing you discover the cheat mode, that is . . . The game has been constructed very well – everything is there to make it really enjoyable – sound, great graphics and some amusing puzzles. The scrolling information printer works well in conjunction with the rest of the game, adding to the 'techno' feel. The only drawback is that the second game can get very frustrating, especially as Number Five has but one life. Having said that, SHORT CIRCUIT is still a marvellous product and the best thing Ocean have done for ages.

Richard



■ Ocean are slowly reclaiming their name as one of the best software houses around, and SHORT CIRCUIT should help the process. The first part of the game, an arcade adventure, is well-structured and quite logically set out – evident if you make a map. The chase sequence is frustrating, usually ending with Number Five in the river or down a hole. The music that plays throughout the action is pleasant to listen to and gives a feeling of urgency. The factory section gives the player plenty of time to escape, and once mastered it shouldn't take long to escape during subsequent sessions in control of Number Five. Nice one, Ocean!

Anthony

Searching the office reveals a 'bug' – of the creepy-crawly kind

far right of the building – and it's Five's escape route. However, if the fugitive attempts to leave before the all the correct objects and components have been collected, he is captured immediately. A successful escape allows the player to load up the second half of the game – a mad chase. If you're unable to escape from the factory, a cheat mode grants access to the chase game – but here is not the place to leak the secret . . .

The chase takes place over a horizontally-scrolling country landscape infested with all manner of animals. Number Five is so sensitive that if he injures a cute creature he overloads his emotion circuits with grief. This overload immobilises him for a while, leaving him prey to the Guards who are following his tracks. Number Five can jump and fire his laser but his shots aren't deadly: when he hits the Guards they are only stunned – their trousers fall down. Other Nova Robots also pursue Number Five, and like the Guards, they can be temporarily disabled with the laser. While the fugitive is busy dealing with his pursuers he must also avoid hazards such as rocks, logs, puddles and the occasional lake – falling into the lake is fatal, for it shorts out the robot's circuitry.

At the end of the chase lies a van and, providing Five arrives there without being detected by the Nova Helicopter, he can make his escape to freedom. What he gets up to then is another story altogether . . .

In the chase game, Number Five has just got a guard to lower his trousers. Just as well . . . after squashing a rat, the robot is so full of remorse that he's immobile

PRESENTATION 93%
Very good, creating instant appeal.

GRAPHICS 93%
Colourful, clear and often humorous.

SOUND 90%
An enjoyable tune plays throughout.

PLAYABILITY 92%
Very good – in both Part One and Part Two.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 91%
Lots of puzzling-out to begin with, followed by frantic action in the second half.

VALUE FOR MONEY 90%
The price is justified – you get two games, after all!

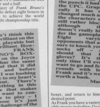
OVERALL 91%
One of the better film tie-in games.

FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING

Elite, £14.95 disk, keys only

Know wot I mean Joyce? I'm here, isn't I?' Everybody's favourite boxing hero has finally made it to the Joyce after slogging it out on the CPC machines for well over a year and a half.

The object of *Frank Bruno's Boxing* is to defeat eight boxers in succession to achieve the world heavyweight championship title.



I didn't think this was brilliant on the CPC, playable but not brilliant. However, FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING on the Joyce still has the same appeal that it did then and before long I was bashing away to my heart's content. There's something in this game that makes you want to continue to play – I suppose it's just the challenge of the eight opponents who all vary in their boxing abilities. Graphically, it works to a certain extent but the blockiness of the characters is still there and I was never very taken by that – and I don't think I've ever heard a Frank Bruno punch go 'plink' before. Give this one a whirl.

Richard

To defeat each boxer a player must learn their individual styles before knocking them down three times – achieved by reducing the opponent's status to zero with continual well placed punches. However, should your opponent knock you down three times then the game will end.

Every time the boxer is defeated an EVBA code (Elite Video Boxing Association) is issued. This code enables you to access the next boxer, and return to him at any desired point.

As Frank you have a variety of possible moves including: Guard up or down, left or right punch, dodge left or right, right hook, upper cut and duck. The type of punch that is used depends on whether your guard is up or down; if your guard is up then you will deliver a punch to the head, if your guard is down then Frank will do a body punch. The right hook or upper cut, as mentioned, can only be used when the KO indicator is flashing.

All eight opponents vary in size and fighting styles. The first boxer, Canadian Crusher, is big and lumbering but he is quite easy to defeat because of this. Fling Long Chop is small, fast and a master of the martial arts – beware of his kicks. Andra Puncheredov, from the USSR, is a fast dancing Russian who enjoys headbutting you. Trible Trouble has a vicious temper and he lands his punches with unnerving accuracy. Frenchie appears to be suave and sophisticated but he is ready to make you see stars. Ravioli Mafiosi knows all the dirty tricks and is quite prepared to use them. Antippodean Andy is Australia's champ, he feels no pain. Peter Perfect is the current world champ and as his name suggests he is the most neat and accurate boxer in history.

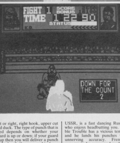
Having beaten up that lot one final EVBA code is issued allowing you to see the final effect.

No problems here, FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING has still got the punch it had on the CPC. Graphically it has not changed much and the characters are still rather blocky although this doesn't really hinder the gameplay. Eight varying opponents that are sure to knock your socks off – or should that be gloves? It's the only time I'll ever want to go and few rounds with big Frank and it's well worth a bash.

Mass

It seems that this version of FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING was dumped straight from a CPC as all the graphics are the same as the original. The differing styles of the competitors makes the game much more interesting, and the game plays in just the same was as it did in its original form. The game itself, though, is beginning to show its age, but if you fancy a sparring partner for your Joyce then try FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING.

Tony



Presentation 80%
Varied options providing an easy start.

Graphics 72%
Blocky, but the same as the CPC version.

Sound 34%
Thumping noise that goes 'Ping'!

Playability 76%
May take some time mastering the controls on keys.

Addictive Qualities 75%
Compulsion to complete all the levels.

Value for Money 70%
Normal price for the Joyce.

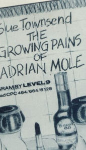
Overall 78%
An enjoyable boxing game, the only drawback is Frank looks like the Incredible Hulk.

STOP PRESS: **Virgin** will throw in three first prizes of *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole*, signed by the authoress Sue Townsend.

WIN A BEETROOT!

(Yes, really, you can win a beetroot!)

50 COPIES OF THE GROWING PAINS OF ADRIAN MOLE



up for grabs too!

If you know what's hip, what's going down and what's hot you'll of probably heard of the latest craze that is sweeping the country . . . Beetroots! Yes, beetroots are all the rage recently now that Adrian Mole has made a reappearance both on the telly, and now on the Amstrad courtesy of Virgin. That nice lady at Virgin Games, Patricia Mitchell, is not only offering one beetroot – but a great big jar of the things. Absolutely scrummy in sarnies and in beetroot crumble and the best thing of it is you can extract the dye to change the colour of your mother's favourite dress. Purple is such a nice colour.

As you should know Bert and Queenie, Moley's adopted Grand parents, absolutely thrive on the bit of odd beetroot and Virgin couldn't think of a better in which to celebrate the launch of their new game, *The Growing Pains Of Adrian Mole*, then to give away a jar load of them.

"I wanna beetroot – I wanna be hip, cool and trendy" I hear you all saying. Well, we're not just going to give you a jar of beetroots (and fifty copies of the game for runners-up – and one for the winner) just like that. No, by Golly! A few questions must be asked first . . .

1. Who is Adrian Mole's Girlfriend?
a) Queenie Baxter
b) Pandora Braithwaite
c) Patricia Mitchell

2. What is the name of Bert's alsatian?
a) Sabre
b) Rover
c) Malcolm

3. Who sung the Adrian Mole TV theme tune?
a) Ian Anderson
b) Ian Dury
c) Lulu

4. In the first TV series 'The Secret Diary' who played Adrian Mole's mother?
a) Anne Diamond
b) Julie Goodyear
c) Julie Walters

5. What is the nick-name of Adrian's father's girlfriend?
a) String-bean
b) Monkfish face
c) Compost head

Whisk your answers, on a post card or a sealed envelope, off to . . .

I love Beetroots, AMTIX!, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire. SY8 1DB to arrive to later than 10th April.

AMTIX! COMPETITION



TOP TWENTY FOR APRIL

Here we go again, the Top 20 as decided by our own groupie AMTIX! readers. The figures in brackets are last month's positions.

THE LUCKY WINNERS

Every month we generous types here at AMTIX! Towers have been awarding the grand sum of £40 worth of software to the lucky reader whose form is drawn from Uncle Malcolm's toupee (sorry Crumbly). In addition the next four readers, whose forms are drawn, will have their very own AMTIX! T Shirts and hats to love and cherish.

This month the lucky reader who wins the £40 of software is **Antony Howard** of Southport, Merseyside PR9 8HY. T Shirts and Caps will be winging their way soon to **William Nooke** of Hayes, Middlesex UB4 8QB, **Angelo Charteris** of Westlands, Droitwich, **Simon Hibberd** of Portsmouth PO7 7JN, and **Anita Graer** of Romsey, Hants S51 7UE.

1 *(16)* **Gauntlet** – US Gold

2 *(4)* **IKARI WARRIORS** – Elite

3 *(5)* **ELITE** – Firebird

4 *(3)* **SPINDIZZY** – Electric Dreams

5 *(1)* **YIE AR KUNG FU** – Imagine

6 *(–)* **SPACE HARRIER** – Elite

7 *(8)* **BATMAN** – Ocean

8 *(2)* **GREEN BERET** – Imagine

9 *(7)* **COMMANDO** – Elite

10 *(14)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** – Elite

11 *(9)* **THRUST** – Firebird

12 *(18)* **WINTER GAMES** – Epyx

13 *(20)* **SCOOBY DOO** – Elite

14 *(–)* **THE EIDOLON** – Activision

15 *(–)* **SORCERY PLUS** – Virgin

16 *(6)* **JACK THE NIPPER** – Gremlin Graphics

17 *(–)* **BOMB JACK** – Elite

18 *(11)* **GET DEXTER** – PSS/ERE

19 *(–)* **THANATOS** – Durell

20 *(–)* **KUNG FU MASTER** – US Gold

TOP TWENTY TWITTERS

Once again a very big THANKS to all of you AMTIX! groupies who voted again this month, we don't mind if you don't agree with our joystick junkies. That's what democracy is all about – people arguing, disagreeing and fighting amongst themselves all the time! As this is the last issue of AMTIX! in its current form, may we say a big thank you to all the readers who have taken the trouble to vote over the months.

It did not take long for *Gauntlet* to take over the number one spot from *Yie Ar Kung Fu.*

There are four new entries this month, including one of our Accolades, *The Eidolon* from **Activision**. There are also two re-entries, *Sorcery Plus* from **Virgin** and *Bombjack* from **Elite**. Special congratulations should go to **Elite** who have no less than six games in the Top 20.

SAFFRON'S ALL TIME HIGH SCORING HUNKS!

BATMAN (Ocean)
9,102 Robert Lane, Mansfield
8,884 Jonathan Cale, Exeter
8,264 Luigi Antonioni, London

BOMB JACK (Elite)
1,126,000 Jonathan Ash, Sutton Coldfield
550,850 John Farquhar, Lismore

CAULDRON II (Palace)
Completed Richard Hewitt, Stoke on Trent
completed Gordon Macdonald, Chichester
9,700 Mark Cleland, Motherwell

COMMANDO (Elite)
192,290 Matthew Ross, Wokingham
147,680 Steven Gooch, Chandlers Ford
128,080 Michael Stirling, West Ferry

DAN DARE (Virgin Games)
Completed (And shot Mekon!) Mass Valducci, AMTIX! Towers
Completed Neil Graham, London
294,380 Daniel Webster, Buckingham

EIDOLON
338,204 Churchdown, Glos.

ELITE (Firebird)
655,359,999 Tony Clarke, AMTIX! Towers
49,692,192 Credits Andrew Mpouzer
49,1449 Credits Ewan Mains, Hamilton

FIFTH AXIS (Loriciels)
99%, Shane Gilmartin, Malahide
86%, Saffron Trevaskis, AMTIX! Towers

GAUNTLET (US Gold)
1,153,679 Jonathan Ash, Coldfield
1,262,213 Simon Pollen, Wiltshire
300,000 Mark Chappell, Northorpe
5,800 Simon Machell, Wirral

GET DEXTER (PSS/ERE)
304,100 Mark Cleland, Motherwell
248,500 Luigi Antonioni, London
146,000 Gary the Gnome, Dalton-in-Furness

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS (Elite)
368,400 A Herdman
271,750 Mark Carter, Willenhall
284,920 Jonathan Cale, Exeter

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,164,680 Paul Jolleys, Wigan
351,900 Sunil Hirani, Acton
164,580 David Edwards, Stockton-On-Tees

HARVEY HEADBANGER (Firebird)
99 - 0, John Lloyd, Market Harbrough

IKARI WARRIORS (Elite)
1,995,500 Mark Chappell, Northorpe
2,258,900 Michael Man, Digmoor
2,245,300 Jonathon Powell, Hereford
1,129,200 Mark Wayboys, Witham

INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST (Pandora)
142,650 Terry Dean, Nottingham

JACK THE NIPPER
66% Simon Machell, Wallasey

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
50,000 St. John Bird, Fakenham

KNIGHT TYME (Mastertronic)
100% John Lloyd Horsham
100% Richard Hewitt, Stoke on Trent
100% Daniel Webster, Buckingham

KUNG FU MASTER (US Gold)
1,963,800 T Ward, Betws-Y-Coed
356,300 Jason Atkinson, Chorley
154,500 Simon Machell, Wirral

LIGHTFORCE (FTL)
8,752,150 Jonathan Ash, Sutton Coldfield
651,650 Andrew Peters, Preston
327,500 Mark Chapell, Northorpe
179,750 Gopi Mohn, Lowestoft

MATCHDAY
70-2 Adrian Vassallo, Malta

SCOOBY DOO (Elite)
309, 050 David Gillon, County Durham
207, 600 Richard Eddy, Ludlow
56,350 Mel O Sullivan, Dublin

SORCERY (Amsoft)
100% Completed, Tony Clarke, AMTIX! Towers
133,095 Bryan Hart, Chalgrove
106,447 David Rowland, Kilmarnock

SPACE HARRIER (Elite)
5,904,536 Brian Keys, Co Fermanagh
4,990,407 Gopi Mohan, Lowestoft
2,337 653 Steven Gooch, Chandlers Ford
1,258,888 Simon Machell, Wirral.

SPINDIZZY (Electric Dreams)
106 Jewels, Andre Page, Bristol
396,950 Maurice Bowness, Merseyside
243,248 Antony Power, Bognor Regis

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
98% Robert Moore, Cumbria
92% Luigi Antonioni
90% D Deeley, Warwick

STARSTRIKE TWO (Realtime)
1,198,600 Paul Selvidge, Chatham
1,450,000 Gary Marshall, Swanwick
1,409,600 Paul Jolleys, Wigan

THRUST (Firebird)
91,050 Michael Aldridge, Telford
62,300 Anthony Bashier-Jones, Gwent
52,500 Steven Gooch, Chandlers Ford

TEMPEST (Electric Dreams)
76,797 Daniel Webster, Buckingham
51,232 Stuart Rendell, Kirkwall
49,129 Neil Faulkner, Watford

WHO DARES WINS II (Alligata)
998,560 Sohail Akram, Rochdale
579,700 Mark Lloyd, Co Kildare
545,660 Jije Apted, Wembley

YIE AR KUNG FU (Imagine)
62,520,630 Luigi Antonioni, London
10,700,600 Mark Richard Long, Witham
7,152,350 Jije Apted, Wembley

Saffron Trevaskis

Winners

Sorting out the latest batch of competitions has meant some heavy burning of the midnight oil. Time seems to have flown at the speed of light in recent weeks and there does not seem to be enough hours in any day. Crumbly appears to have got over his sore head, he's back to his normal aggressive self, giving everyone a hard time, particularly yours truly. Anyway enough of the moans and on to the good news, the latest batch of lucky winners.

AVENGER COMPETITION

This competition has probably been won by all the AMTIX! readers who are experts in the martial arts. All you had to do was answer seven questions which referred to this discipline. The five main winners each receive three adventure books, an *Avenger* T Shirt, and a copy of the game of the same name. The lucky five are:
John Sholicar, Coronation Road, Cheltenham GL52 3DA; A M Jones, Monkmoor Road, Shropshire; Richard Smith, Bush Hill, NN3 2PD; Angela Charteris, Ploughman's Rise, Droitwich, Worcestershire; Terry James, Kensington Close, Shropshire.

CRUMBLY'S A POSEUR

Exponents of that mega game *Trivial Pursuit* should have had no trouble answering the simple questions in this competition from **Domark**. Crumbly wanted to see the entries so he could cheat on the questions for him, but to be fair he did manage to answer some of them! The winner of the mega prize of a *Trivial Pursuit* game, plus Genus II board game, a TP quiz book, TP mug, and TP chocolates was: **David J Weir, of Tarn Road, Surrey GU26 6TP**. The two runners up, who each receive a quiz book, TP mug and box of chocolates are: **V Hill, Oaktree Road, Southampton; and Richard Burton, of Polventon Parc, Cornwall, TR12 6RB.**

There were a further seven prizes of the *Trivial Pursuit* quiz book which went to the following: **Julia Myles, Roosevelt Road, Durham, DH1 1PS; Daniel Tebb, Brownlow Street, YO3 7LW; Andrew Gibson, Beaford Close, Lancs, WN5 8LB; A Newell, Church Street, West Sussex, RH12 BEG; John Lloyd, Ash Road, West Sussex, RH13 7EJ; Stephen Atkinson, Welland Close, Northants, NN9 6SQ; Dave Sheppard, Prinstead Walk, Hampshire, PO14 3AD.**

BOBBY BEARING COMPETITION

Word squares are popular competitions and there were many correct entries in this one about *Bobby Bearing*, one of the newest games from **The Edge**. The lucky winner who receives the mega first prize of a bag of goodies including copies of *Bobby Bearing*, *Paltron*, and *Fairlight* was **R A Bewes, House 112 Room 25, Castle Irwell, Manchester M6 6DB.** A copy of the game *Bobby Bearing* goes to the following runners up:

Roger Cope, Honiton Road, EX1 3EP; James Cuerden, Dean Close, SK10 5NP; Julian Potter, Rowthorne Lane, SW4 5QE; Nicholas Johnson, Storeton Road, Merseyside, L43 5TN; W G Nuttall, Fox Hill, London, SE19 2UX; Geoff Balding, Cadogan Road, IP33 3QJ; Andrew Yates, Stonebridge, PE2 0NT; Matthew Kane, Moorside View, West Yorkshire BD11 1HN; Ian Collins, Dawes Close, WS15 4B; Paul Cannell, Gorse Lane, CT6 7BE; Richard Burton, Polventon Parc, TR12 6RB; Philip Robson, Park Lane, TS1 3LQ; D R Herbert, King Edward Avenue, TN34 2NG; Andy Chaplin, Hilderthorpe Road, YO15 3ES; Andrew Brown, Spindle Wood Close, Devon; Julian Cater, St Leonards Road, SW14 7LY; A Khaw, Broadstone Way, BD4 9BU; Tom Scutt, Nyewood Lane, W Sussex; C Richards, Hannah Street, M12 5SN; Charles H M Joynson, Lime Tree Grove, West Yorkshire, BD11 2BJ; Colin Johnson, Granville Road, DL14 6UD; Robert Hallett, Hollyfield Close, HP23 5PL; P Newnham, Clenedon Road, BS23 1DD; Tony Vassiliou, Priory Gardens, Middlesex, HA0 2QG; Mrs J Holland, Heatherstone, Ayrshire; John Bird, West Street, NT21 9LQ; Bryan Hill, Croshaw Drive, OL12 0SR; J Vaicolonis, Headley Bar, LS24 9NL; Russell Peek, Whitchurch Avenue, Dorset BH18 8LW; D Rodkin, Crown Street, Telford, Shropshire; Shawn John, Boundary Road, E17 8NQ; Richard Taylor, Broadmead, Merseyside LEO 1XD; Mark Lee, Leopardstown Court, Co.Dublin, Eire; Ian Perry, Minshead Way, SG1 2HZ; Glenn Harvey, Clogher Road, County Down, N Ireland; S Upright, Bateman Street, CB2 1NB; Lin Wright, Rudyard Avenue, DE2 7LJ; D West, Prittle Close, Essex SS7 3YR; A Milligan, William Street, DD8 2HU; William Marton, Taylor Street, Glasgow; Richard Minshaw, Belvedere Road, CV5 6PF; Brianne Barton, Cammellia Close, CF44 8YE; Kevin Patton, Wharfedale, HP2 5TG; Metin Algin, Beeston Close, 2MG; Darren Newnham, Arpen Close, BR8 7UB; David Blyth, Kevington Drive, NR32 3JL; Stephen Plummer, Chelmer Avenue, CM3 3PB; Karl Vilbert, Newton Road, SO21 1PE; Ernest Nelson, Jocelyn Gardens, BT6 9BA; Richard Nicholson, Haslemere Yarmouth Road, NR12 9RL.

BALL BREAKING

COMPETITION

There are some very witty readers out there, trouble is some of the captions were a bit blue for this *Ballbreaker* competition from **CRL**. The lucky five who each receive a Newton's Cradle and a copy of the game *Ballbreaker* are: **Craig Rickaby, Bowes Road, DL5 5LP; Mr T S Hanitzsch, Chockleys Drive, TF1 4TS; Peter White, Church Court, S31 7FR; Russell Dye, Hillside Road, WF7 7NJ; Richard Burton, Polventon Parc, TR12 6RB.**

Five second prizes of a magnetic Ballcluster and a copy of *Ballbreaker* go to **R A Bewes, Castle Irwell, Cromwell Road, M6 6DB; V Hill, Oaktree Road, SO2 4PN; Stephen Plummer, Chelmer Avenue, CM3 3PB; Tony Mills, Brunswick Court, L41 6LW; Dave Sheppard, Prinstead Walk, PO14 3AD.**

A copy of the game *Ballbreaker* goes to the following 25 people: **Paul Cannell, Gorse Lane, CT6 7BE; Graeme Rogan, Kilburn Close, RG3 7DH; David Gibbon, Quarry Crescent, DH7 7DR; Daryl Ward, Pineways, WA4 5EJ; Mrs J Flay, Paterson-Wilson Road, BN17 6EJ; Mark Smith, Little Lane, WF9 2NX; David Elson, St Johns Road, Co Durham; Glynn Hicks, Old Road, SA11 2ER; Neil Taylor, Oxhayes Close, CV7 7PS; Metin Algir, Beeston Close, E8 2HG; Guy Sanders, Chesterfield Road, Herts; David Elliott, Lowside Drive, OL4 1AS; Ricardo Sueiras, Solent Close, SO41 9ST; A E Salisbury, Lupin Way, CO16 7DX; Tim Gurney, Thanescroft Cottage, GU5 0TJ; H Banks, Willoughby Road, NE29 7NB; Stephen Lucas, Ruskin Way, L36 5UL; Chris Beckett, Park Avenue, BB9 6DG; Ernest Nelson, Jocelyn Gardens, BT6 9BA; Richie Kerr, Alderbank Terrace, EH11 1TA; Mark Chappell, Woodside East, PE10 0HT; Geoff March, Abbots Close, GU2 5RW; Damon Chichester, Tyn-Y-Parc Road, CF4 4BJ; Colin Johnson, Granville Road, DL14 6UD; Daniel Taylor, Fountain Road, NP4 8HU.**

DAN DARE COMPETITION

Readers have been ringing up and writing in to ask what happened to the results of the *Dan Dare* competition which was run back in our December issue. Well Crumbly can stall no longer! He has to admit he misplaced the entries. Competitors had to complete a *Dan Dan* comic sterip adventure for **Virgin Games** and then answer some questions.

The two winners each receive a copy of the game, a T.Shirt, a book, and three videos or five albums and a poster. The lucky duo are **Alex Garland, Heath Hurst Road, NW3 2RU; and Ian Berriman, Birch Drive, HU18 6LB.**

Three runners up each receive a copy of the game, a T.Shirt and a poster. They are: **Richard Saw, Lodge Road, CO5 9TU; A M Jones,49 Monkmoor Road, Oswestry; Shropshire, Mark Harris, Spinney Close, NR15 2SX.**

The following runners up each receive a copy of the game and a poster. They are: **Stephen Humphreys, Boode Croft, L28 4EW; Graham Camps, York Street, Oswestry; Simon Gibbs, Green Lane, S18 6LN; Ralph Coles, Bruce Road, RG5 3D3; Terry James, 10 Kensington Close, Oswestry; Paul Robson, Park Lane, TS1 3LQ; Angela Charteris, Ploughman's Rise, Droitwich.**

ASTERIX COMPETITION

The chance to own 16 *Asterix* titles courtesy of **Melbourne House** appealed to a lot of our readers. The winner, who receives this prize and a copy of the game *Asterix and the Magic Cauldron* is **D Tedeso, of Grant Hall, HU16 5SF.** The fifty runners up each receive a copy of the game are:

David Gough, Hinkley, LE3 3GH; Jason King, Station Road, NR31 9JA; Mrs J Flay, Paterson Wilson Road, BN17 6EJ; Nicola Radley, Chorley Wood Road, WD3 4HF; Adam Jakes, Hatley Road, SG19 3HH; Christopher Letch, Eaves Street, FY1 2NH; Mark Turner, The Boldings, WV16 4SS; J S Watt, Roper Road CT2 7EH; Tim Green, Clinton Road, KT22 8NT; Matthew Doubleday, Belmore Close, NR7 0PS; Russell Cushion, Fairview Road, NR28 9HR; George Zenios, Woodland Way, N21 3PX; Justin Shackleston, Longfield Road, ST4 6QW; Bryan Hughes, Lahar Close, RG22 4HT; David Blyth, Kevington Drive, NR32 3JL; Yat Wah Cheung, Belfast Road, BT20 3NN; Gawain Barton, Camellia Close, CF44 8YE; Lee Doswell, Belle Vue Street, Y01 5AY; Francis Arkhurst, Milton, N6 5QD; Amtix! Reader, Church Road, West Sussex; Russell Peek, Whitchurch Avenue, BH18 8LW; Melo Sullivan, Culmore Park, Dublin 20' Rhoann Phillips, Merthyr Road, CF4 7LG; Louise Wright, Rudyard Avenue, DE2 7LA; Paul Chamberlain, Cherry Wood, PR1 0PJ; Mr A Mason, Bath Road, BA2 8JH; An Dat Phung, Craigmyle Street, KY12 0BT; Daniel Martin, Greenbank Farm Cottage, LA11 7SQ; Adam Leem, Speldhurst Road, W4 1BY; Guy Sanders, Chesterfield Road, Barnet, Herts; Per Poulsen, Lindehaven 21.B, Denmark; Dominic Beston, Victoria Crescent, SE19 1AE; Kris Joo Ganah, Pasteur Gardens, N18 1JN; Philip Hobson, Molescroft Park, HU17 7HY; Darrell Wheatley, Finches Green, GU34 2JU; Robert Bird, Oak Road, B70 8HE; Ian Bonner, Aveling Park Road, E17 4NU; CFN Weaver SM 24783851, Garrison Bordon, GO3 0SE; Rhys Lewis, Colbeck Mews, N1 2YA; Andrew Robinson, Falmouth Gardens, Essex; Paul Partington, Sleepbrook Close, BH21 6QE; Ashley Westen, Squirrels Leap, Woking, Surrey; Marc Henney, Hartley Burn, B77 4BL; Paul Schuricht, Southway, NW16 6RU; Jamie Snowden, Willow Park, WF1 2JD; Gareth Walker, Grange Park Avenue, Cheshire; Chris Beckett, Park Avenue, BB9 6DG; Tony Richardson, High Street, CO14 8BW; Mr P N Mason, The Lawns, Rolleston-On-The-Dove, DE13 9DB; Kevin Bevan, Sussex Avenue, WS10 0SP.

ROGUE MINION COMPETITION

There is a definite shortage of design experts out there! Entries were definitely on the low side for this **Piranha** competition. Ten first prizes of a copy of the game, *Rogue Trooper* and a 2000 AD annual go to: **Daniel Goldsack, Maudlin Lane, BN4 3PR; Gordon Hayward, Brackendale Grove, LU3 2LT; Robert White, Sunnybank Street, WF5 8PE; Christopher Taylor, Hilda Park, DH2 2JP; Robin Newton, Summerfield, CB3 9HE; Philip Cape, The Villas, DH9 8DQ; Jimmy Davies, Chelmer Road, CM8 2EY; Stephen Humphries, Boode Croft, L28 4EW; David Heath, Kensworth Close, ST5 3LH; Jill Dodge, Badlesmere Road, BN22 8TW.**

The 20 runners up each receive a copy of *Rogue Trooper*. They are: **Darren Newnham, Aspen Close, BR8 7UB; Piers Foot, Melton Road, NG12 5BQ; Mark Warriner, Whitfield Avenue, YO18 7HY; Ben Smales, Beverley Road, H10 7QB Nicholas Johnson, Storeton Road, L43 5TN; Angela Charteris, Ploughman's Rise, Worcestershire; Damon Chichester, Tyn-Y-Parc Road, CF4 4BJ; F Gniadkowski, B44 3RE; John H Messon, Viewlands Rise, West Yorkshire; Michael D Holland, Ledbury Road, Hants; A M Jones, Oswestry, Shropshire; Amtix! Reader, Church Street, RH12 3EG; Andrew Childs, Melville Avenue, GU16 5LX; Philip Stubbs, Hayfield Road, B13 9HJ; Chris Barton, Oxford Street, CT5 1DB; Mr E Stilwell, West Common Road, UB8 1NZ; G J Bostock, Westmorland Road, M31 1HN; Dave Sheppard, Prinstead Walk, PO14 3AD; Andrew Leakey, Schofield Street, WN7 4HT; Craig Rickaby, Bowes Road, DL5 5LP.**

MALCOLM AND AMTIX! c

A PERSONAL COMPA

B.

C.

A.

Jogging suits and AMTIX! caps for the runners up

AMTIX! COMPETITION

As we said last month here at AMTIX! Towers there is no-one who has not been subjected to the pulsating sound of the loud music that is constantly played on the office ghetto blaster. Once someone buys a new album then it's played mercilessly for days until all the song's words are known almost perfectly, so that the Spikey Haired reviewers can then impress their loved ones with their tear-filled renditions of their own favourite songs.

Each of us has our own very special song that we sing in times of distress especially if the Doc Martened one is about with an encouraging loaded boot!

"Every Loser Wins", my personal favourite, calms my fears whilst "Oh My Father Had A Rabbit", skinned alive by Richard's tonsils, does the same for him. "Devil Woman" is the apt choice for Saffron, whilst Massimo's "Yes, We Have No Bananas" soothes his aching fingers. Yes they all like a good song in times of trouble but it is Malcolm's personal favourite of "The First Cut Is The Deepest" has them all running (carefully) to the bathroom.

How does anyone work amid all this noise I hear you cry over the cacophony. Well, for Malcolm it's easy – just a few turns on the volume control of his hearing aid and he's safe from both the wall of music and the sound of his own singing. All the Spikey Ones have their very own personal stereos so they can listen to the latest that pop has to offer without the screams and yodellings of Malcolm bothering them.

Well, Malcolm has decided to strike back at them all by making them all so extremely jealous of his unprecedented generosity. He's offering a personal Compact Disc player as the first prize in AMTIX!'s very own competition. There are also ten compact discs to go to the winner just to start off their Digital Sound system collection. Such generosity by Malcolm is almost unprecedented and should be savoured, so we decided to run this competition over two issues.

If you read last month's AMTIX! you will remember you had to collect the coupon that appeared in that issue and the one in this issue. This will entitle you, if you win, to have a new CD player and 10 compact discs to put into it. Both coupons must be sent in with either entry form. Remember no photocopies are allowed for this mega competition.

What you must do is to decide which of the headphones shown in the drawing is actually plugged into the Compact Disc player. Circle the correct one, fill in the form, and send the two coupons to the address below. Five runners up receive jogging suits while the next 10 will win themselves a very trendy AMTIX! cap.

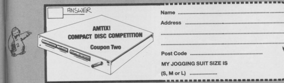
Send your entry to AMTIX! Compact Disc Player Competition, AMTIX! Towers, P O Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB – to arrive no later than the 2nd of April. Good luck everyone!

The second section of a two part competition . . .

OFFER YOU THE CHANCE TO WIN
ACT DISC PLAYER . . .

. . With ten compact discs with which to begin your CD collection

THE EVER SO GENEROUS COMPACT DISC PLAYER AND CD DISCS COMPETITION





WARLOCK

The Edge, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

If you're fed up fighting for the side of good and fancy being a bit nasty – shooting warriors, clubbing fair maidens and so forth then you might be pleased to know that **The Edge** have released a game which allows you to do exactly that . . .

Take control of the evil Warlock as he attempts to defend his castle against all manner of goody-goodies who have infiltrated and are trying to convert you fellow evil-doers to the ways of good.

There is but one thing that will destroy the good force – the Orb of Power. Unfortunately it's so long since it was thrown down into the dungeons that you've forgotten where it is – and so begins a long search.

Richard — CRITICISM

I like the idea – trying to kill off the good guys for a change. It's basically a good old 3D arcade adventure with a bit of gratis killing thrown in for good measure and it's quite enjoyable. The graphics in WARLOCK vary from very good, like the backgrounds, to the rather weak characters such as the maidens. Unfortunately when there is lots of animation on screen the action slows down, but this is only to be expected. Even so it's still quite off-putting. If 3D adventures go down well with you check this one out. It's got all the right ingredients and a little bit more.

Anthony — CRITICISM

3D games have got to be something special to be any good these days. WARLOCK is neither original nor special, simply another Knightlore rehash. The graphics on the other hand range from great to bland. The walls, obstacles and objects are beautifully designed but the main characters and nasties are dreadful. The game itself is easy to get into and the speed helps the player keep an interest in the game. Joystick control is easy to master, unlike many other 3D games, and is a joy to use. If a little more had gone into this game then it could have been something special, but in this form it is nothing more than another average 3D game.

The maze is constructed from a complex of underground rooms – all of which are displayed in colourful isometric fashion with various types of doors inter-connecting them. Some are locked, some are blocked off and some can only be used by the many kinds of meanies, er, goodies – the opposition. Luckily, to combat the foes the *Warlock* is armed with a few special powers – the most effective being the electric bolt that can be fired from his fingertips. The *Warlock* is a changeling; enabling him to change into a Goblin or Troll when a bottle of potion is drunk.

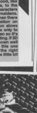
In either guise the *Warlock*, Troll and Goblin each have different powers which come into use as the game progresses. In addition there are treasures, keys and food which have been stored in the dungeon in case of emergency – like now!

As with any dungeon there is a network of secret passages and tunnels which jump you from one location to another, along with secluded walls and doorways.

Although it is your dungeon, the opposition have planted several electrified traps in the shape of golden globes – touching these drains the *Warlock*'s power of magic. Energy is kept up by continually gobbling food that litters the dungeon floor – not eating enough results in one of the three *Warlock* re-incarnations being lost. Having found the Orb of Power the goodies can be vanquished and you can return to plotting, raping and marauding and other things that Warlocks tend to get involved with.

Mass — CRITICISM

To me it's just another 3D arcade adventure with nothing distinct or novel to offer. The characters sometimes become indistinguishable from the scenery and they seem to lack that certain definition that would make them stand out a little better. The backgrounds, on the other hand, are very well designed being both colourful and logically laid out. The main character slows down dramatically when there's a lot on screen which tends to be off putting from the view of gameplay. I have never been taken by 3D games of any sort and I'm afraid to say that WARLOCK does nothing to change my mind. Having said that, if you're into this sort of game then it might be worth investigating.



PRESENTATION 68%
Lots of on screen options with a good high-score table.

GRAPHICS 72%
Some excellent backdrops but a few weak characters.

SOUND 60%
Reasonable rendition of Halls of the Mountain King.

PLAYABILITY 68%
Very easy to get into once the concept is mastered.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 65%
As with any maze game there's always a temptation to explore everywhere.

VALUE FOR MONEY 66%
Fair product that is suitably priced.

OVERALL 67%
A good variant for 3D fans.



DRAGON'S LAIR PART II

ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE

Software Projects, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

The arcade game, *Dragon's Lair*, consists of sixteen sub-games. *Dragon's Lair*, the computer game – reviewed last month, brought the player the first eight of those levels and now in *Escape From Singe's Castle* the last eight sub-games are here for you to experience – and what an experience they are!

Dirk, the hero, has just returned from rescuing Daphne from the clutches of the mighty dragon, Singe – who he has long since killed. Dirk now decides it's time to reap his just rewards as he returns to the castle to pinch the legendary magic pot of gold. However, a new problem has arisen. The latest ruler of the Castle, the Lizard King, also wants the gold and has set a series of eight traps and puzzles to push Dirk to his wit's end.

■ **If there's ever been an arcade conversion that works as a totally different game then this is it. No-one could hope for a real translation, but Software Projects have done a magnificent job and have produced a highly playable and addictive game. Well, no, there's eight very different games all waiting to be played to the full. Boulder Alley and The Flying Horse really appealed to me – they are frantic, fast and maddeningly addictive. They also include two of the best pieces of music I've heard for a long time. The graphics may appear rather crude, but they work superbly. ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE is an exciting game that deserves to do exceedingly well.**

Richard



△ *Trapped inside the castle, Dirk the Daring has to find the sword and pot of gold before the Lizard King catches him*

YE RIVER CAVES

The first test is a series of 3D screens showing Dirk's hazardous journey as he paddles through the rivers below the castle. Picking the correct route through the boulders is essential – an indication of the correct route is given, but reactions need to be quick. There's also lethal whirlpools that move from left to right on the screen – avoid these or become drowned in the river system.

BOULDER ALLEY

Having escaped from the river caves, Dirk finds himself in a long, slippery tunnel hotly pursued by a giant boulder. This smashes Dirk to a pulp if he runs too slowly. Smaller boulders oscillate from side to side along the walls of the tunnel, and should be dodged. Holes in the tunnel floor also have to be jumped over. If Dirk collides

▽ *Hurtling down the raging torrent – can Dirk keep his coracle intact?*





with a boulder or falls in a hole he is squashed.

THRONE ROOM
The slimy Lizard King has set Dirk a series of traps which have to be overcome before progressing any further. They include electric bolts which fly out from the orb in the centre and a giant hand which should be either hacked off or simply dodged.

DOOM DUNGEON
A creepy dungeon full of hazards which, again, should be either killed with Dirk's sword or avoided. Flames spring from the floor, spiders descend from the rafters and snakes come from behind doors. The only escape is a narrow tunnel on the right of the screen . . . but it's blocked by an upturned table!

■ **I thought DRAGON'S LAIR was a great game, and I'm glad to say that its sequel is even better. The eight different sections are just that little more playable and that's what makes them all so very addictive. The graphics and the tunes are much improved, and add an extra atmospheric quality – making it all the more fun to play. An excellent action-packed game requiring quick wits and good reactions.**

Mass

DUNGEONS OF THE LIZARD KING
The evil Lizard King has stolen Dirk's sword and stuck it in the magic pot of gold. Dirk's objective is to explore the flick screen dungeons, retrieve his sword and swipe the gold. But beware, the Lizard King gives chase with a hefty looking baton which knocks Dirk unconscious. However, some rooms are split by a magic forcefield which the Lizard King can cross but poor old Knighty can't.

MAGICAL FLYING HORSE
Having retrieved his sword and the magic pot of gold, Dirk makes a swift retreat on the back of a magical flying horse through a deep 3D tunnel. Boulders and brick walls have to be avoided or Dirk will perish. The action becomes faster and faster as Dirk progresses through the tunnel.

MYSTIC MOSAIC
Set in a majestically tiled room, Dirk has to make his way across the chequered floor to reach the exit. The tiles constantly disappear – apart from a few which remain safe to stand on. Dirk has to pick the correct route – but one false move and Dirk plummets to his death. Occasionally an attackingbat swoops at Dirk and if it isn't killed off with the sword it forces Dirk to fall to his death.

VALLEY OF THE MUD MONSTERS
The final screen, and freedom is within Dirk's grasp – if only he can reach the magic bottle. This is on the other side of a steamy mud-filled lake. Strange creatures, known as the Mud Monsters, inhabit the landscape and reside in the three craters at the bottom of the screen. They continually attempt to pull Dirk in and boil him to death. The path is a difficult one but another Mud Monster on the far side of the screen may be of assistance as he throws mud which conveniently constructs a bridge. Collect the bottle and it's homeward bound for our glorious hero.

■ **It may seem impossible, but ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE leaves DRAGON'S LAIR way behind in every field. The playability problems that plagued the original are non-existent. The graphics also seem much smoother and faster, with a greater variety of characters. If you enjoyed DRAGON'S LAIR, you'll love ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE – if you haven't seen the original then buy both before they disappear from the shelves!**

Anthony

△ Give him a hand! The revenge of the tarsels in The Throne Room. Watch out for electric shocks too . . .

PRESENTATION 93%
Well thought out instructions, and no hassles with the multi-load.

GRAPHICS 91%
A few weak characters, but superbly implemented.

SOUND 97%
Nine excellent in-game tunes.

PLAYABILITY 94%
Certain levels may take time to master, but all are thoroughly enjoyable.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 95%
There's a strong compulsion to go all the way.

VALUE FOR MONEY 92%
Eight mini-games, all of the same high standard.

OVERALL 94%
A highly playable and addictive challenge.

KORONIS RIFT

Activision, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick and keys

The style of movement in *Koronis Rift* originates from using fractal mathematics to create hills and mountains, which appear to move in correct proportion as the player moves across the barren landscape. The same technique was used in *Rescue on Fractalus* – but this game is very different.

The player takes the role of a techno-scavenger, who makes a living by collecting technological rubbish left by the Ancients on the legendary planet of Koronis.

The surface exploration vehicle, Rover, is lowered onto the planet, the player then consults the radar to locate the nearest hulk. With the deserted hulk in your sights, you drive over the surface, pitching and rolling with every bump, and finally loot the contents. After many years of rotting on the surface the hulks have become remarkably fragile so when they are looted they collapse into a heap of rubble – leaving the player unable to retrieve any other valuables.

■ I was well impressed with KORONIS RIFT. The mountains and hills are very similar to those on FRACTALUS, but are used to much greater effect as the Rover tilts around them as they fade into the surroundings. The gameplay is quite fast. There is more to the game than just scooting around blasting things and much time is needed for decision making, for instance deciding what equipment to keep and what to sell. It's quite a thinking game. Initially, I was being blasted all over place but with a little perseverence the game became totally absorbing and great fun to play. A very effective combination of scavenging, retrieval and shooting that is well worth its price.

Richard

The Rover can then move onto the next hulk and repeat the procedure. The Rover can carry no more than six items at any one time, so when the hold is full it must return to the mother ship, swapping the discovered valuables for hard cash. There is, however, a problem.

The planet of Koronis is built up of twenty mountainous landscapes, known as rifts. The techno-scavenger begins on rift one and should attempt to make his way through all twenty – raiding and looting as he goes. The Ancients, now long gone, have left Guardian saucers to protect the rifts, which were once a testing ground for their war machines. Equipment found on the planet's surface can be fitted to the Rover and so improve the chances of survival.

The Guardian's base is located on rift twenty, destroy that and the planet's wealth is yours for the taking. The Ancients were made up of a federation of thirty individual races, and so the technologies found may not be compatible with the Rover or even one another. This may severely influence the handling of the Rover. All the objects that have been scavenged possess some kind of company logo. It is when a player beings to recognise a compatible part from its logo that play becomes easier.



All of the objects are colour coded, for example a red laser emits a beam of red energy, and is best used against a red saucer.

Having said that, it should be noted that if the shield's power is low, it may be of less use against a laser of similar colour than a highly powerful shield of a different colour. The same can also be said for the lasers.

Other objects can be found (generators and propulsion units for instance), along with other unclassified objects which include such things as maps and music.

Certain hulks are booby trapped, exploding when touched and destroying your Repro-Robot (your scavenging droid). The only option then left open to you, is to return to the mother ship and get a new one – all at extra cost of course. The game is completed when power and efficiency are built up to a maximum and the Guardian's base can be destroyed once and for all. Then it's off to retrieve all that lovely scrap metal to make you fabulously wealthy!

■ Although I thought very little of RESCUE ON FRACTALUS, KORONIS RIFT is quite another matter. The gameplay is very fast, and there is a definite goal rather than a single task. Graphically, KORONIS is far ahead of FRACTALUS. The way the mountains fade in the distance, and way the Rover moves adds a great deal of depth to the 3D graphics. Psytek is beautifully animated with different movements depicting different options – even the background is animated to look like working computers. Like most Lucasfilm games, KORONIS RIFT is unusual and absorbing – well worth every penny.

Anthony

■ This is a really weird combination of exploration, shoot 'em up and puzzles that work very well together. The game itself can prove quite difficult to get to grips with, as the instructions don't relay a great deal. However, after playing it for a while you'll begin to recognise the many problems and how to deal with them. The fractal graphics work very well indeed and, although they may appear blocky when still, it's not until you see the animation that you begin to appreciate them. The action continues at a constant speed and doesn't noticeably slow down at all. KORONIS RIFT is a really absorbing game and if you want something that will keep you playing for a long time this is probably the best you'll get.

Mass



PRESENTATION 93%
Very good. Easy to use with lots of flexible options.

GRAPHICS 92%
Excellent combination of solid and fractal graphics.

SOUND 89%
The Koronis theme tune and useful spot effects.

PLAYABILITY 90%
A simple but absorbing concept.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 91%
Possesses plenty of puzzles in which to become involved.

VALUE FOR MONEY 90%
Twenty rifts will keep you returning.

OVERALL 92%
A thoroughly good exploration and shoot 'em up game.



ACADEMY

CRL, £9.95 cass, joystick and keys

After a certain unfortunate incident concerning a rookie skimmer pilot, Gal-Corp decided to set up a special training course for an elite group of skimmer pilots. As a member of this elite corps, it is your task to complete the twenty missions, split into five levels of four, in order to graduate from the *Academy*.

The first four missions are automatically loaded, and are accessed from the main options menu. This menu also includes; Accept Mission, Select Mission, Select Skimmer, Progress Report, Tape/Disk Menu, Enter a New Cadet, View, and Redefine Keys. Directing the on-screen arrow with the joystick highlights the option it is placed over. Pressing fire accepts it. Each option on the main menu leads to a separate menu.

Information on each of the first four missions can be viewed from the 'select a mission' option where you are given a menu to view each planet separately, tells you what you have to do and also recommends a skimmer for that mission. After the selection is complete, exiting to the main menu allows you to choose a skimmer.

There is a list of three skimmers on which information and a view of the control panel can be accessed. If none of these is to your taste, the 'design a skimmer' option can be used to custom-build a suitable craft. A list of 13 pieces of equipment is then made available, and once again can be chosen by directing the arrow and pressing the fire button to accept. The amount of equipment the skimmer can handle is determined by cost (maximum of 100 MCr) and weight (maximum of 99). Some of

△ *Enemy lasers are blasting away as they launch an all out kamikaze attack.*

▽ *Slow down! – you don't want to crash during an attempt to dock with the mother base.*

■ This is a game that I'm sure will have plenty of appeal to any games player, simply because it is so varied in the missions. A different tactic needs to be employed on each mission – ranging from pelting along, blasting everything, to the more subtle crawling along avoiding mines. There is a great sense of achievement when a mission is completed with a skimmer of your own design. There's plenty to do in ACADEMY and it is by no means easy to make the grade, but it is the attempt that is so much fun. This is a great action-packed game that had me glued to the monitor for hours on end.

Mass

■ I've really enjoyed playing ACADEMY recently, and what makes it so enjoyable is its flexibility. The fact that a player can easily lay out his own screen is marvellous – it means you can put important parts where they are easiest to see and not have to rely on the programmer's judgement of colour and layout. Being able to construct your own skimmer is a great help – but essentially it's a matter of experimenting to find the best skimmer for each particular mission. The missions aren't too similar to each other to become tedious, and again there's lots of variation. No boredom at all. ACADEMY isn't only for TAU CETI fans; it has enough to appeal to anyone with a taste for a big and lasting challenge.

Richard



△ Position is all important when designing the layout of the skimmer's control panel.

the apparatus (such as the scanner and compass) is essential, and must not be omitted – while other pieces are specialised and only required on certain missions. What to carry and what not to carry can be ascertained via the information on the chosen mission.

When a satisfactory choice has been made, it's then time to place all the scanners and apparatus indicators onto a blank control panel. Space is scarce, so careful planning is needed to fit all the chosen equipment on the panel. Then it's back to the main menu and onto the 'accept mission' option, which puts you on the designated planet ready for action.

On each mission the Mother Base is located by use of the compass. The skimmer is repaired, refuelled and re-armed when docked at this base. Completing a mission involves achieving a percentage score of 90 or more, shown at the top of the panel. An average score of 90% over the four mission is necessary before the second level and the next set of missions can be loaded in. The 'progress report' screen shows the overall percentage, and individual percentages of the missions attempted so far.

Skimmers and games can be saved to disk or cassette, and then reloaded before play begins or between missions.

■ **The real joy of ACADEMY is the ease in which you can get into it. It's a great improvement over TAU CETI. The twenty different missions make the game a lasting challenge, with each level being more difficult than the last, requiring different tactics and a different design of ship. The ability to define the layout of the screen is a great boon, and makes the player think – even before the game starts; for example the scanner needs to be close to the main screen, so that it can be quickly read without distracting the player's attention. ACADEMY is for everyone – it's good for brainwork but is also a fast shoot 'em up.**

PRESENTATION 95%
Easy to read step-by-step instructions, with plenty of options.

GRAPHICS 82%
Not outstanding, but they set the game off really well.

SOUND 78%
Again nothing special but they serve their purpose.

PLAYABILITY 93%
Superb flexibility and variation in gameplay.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 92%
20 missions on four levels will keep you going for hours on end.

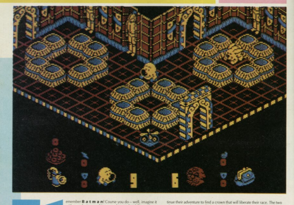
VALUE FOR MONEY 91%
Two missions for every quid can't be bad value for money.

OVERALL 92%
The many options and variation in gameplay make it great fun to play.

AMTIX! Accolade

TOTALLY FLIPPED!

Head Over Heels from Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond is soon to be published by Ocean. Take control of two peculiar life forms that would appear to enjoy living on each others heads. There's puzzling, fast action, sharp shooting and exploration – watch out for this one!



Remember **Batman**? Course you do – well, imagine it with even better graphics, even better playability and . . . Imagine a 3D game that's just out of this world! Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond have just finished **Head Over Heels** – a **Batman** type game to be published by Ocean this month.

The game takes place in the Blacktooth empire – four worlds enslaved by the planet, Blacktooth. Rebellion is in the hearts of the people of the enslaved planets but they've never had the courage to rise up against their oppressive leaders. As Blacktooth gets wind of this unrest the military begins to expand and so the oppressed get even more oppressed than before – something has to be done!

Help is at hand – They've called for a special agent from planet Joinedup to get the full rebellion underway. Now, the residents of Joinedup are an infinitely strange bunch – mostly formed from two symbiotic (Look it up) creatures that appear to enjoy living on one another's heads. The lower half are descendants of land based animals and possess two very powerful legs. Although they can only jump their height they can run like the wind. The upper half are descendants of bird-like creatures, and still retain the remnants of wings. They have no feet and, unless they can ride around on top of the land based animals' heads, they have to walk on their hands which proves very laborious. However, they have great powers for jumping and manoeuvering in mid air. Together they make a formidable team.

The duo selected are Head and Heels – two of the strongest Joineduperdons – but on infiltrating Blacktooth HQ they were captured and locked away in separate cells. Your objective is to help Head and Heels escape, reunite, and move on to the moon base headquarters where they can continue their adventure to find a crown that will liberate their race. The two characters can be controlled individually – so one can wander off and do one thing while the other is off somewhere else.

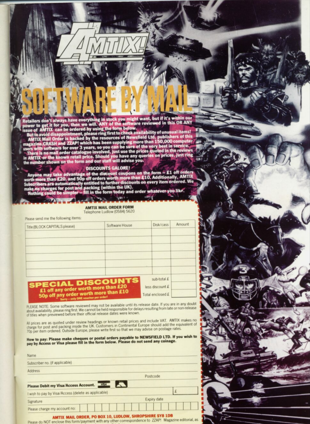
Head Over Heels contains 300 **Batman**-esque screens all shown in the typical Bernie Drummond style – magnificent. The game itself can be played in several ways. Firstly, for beginners, you can take the simple way out and just escape and return to Joinedup or alternatively you can attempt to liberate a planet. If you feel particularly masochistic then you can go for the whole mission which has some really nasty tricks at the end.

As per **Batman** there's plenty of objects to manipulate and one you may remember from **Batman** is the reincarnation stone – instead this time it's the Reincarnation Fish; the only animal in the entire universe that wants to be eaten. Some objects can only be carried or used by either Head or Heels. Head can fire sticky doughnuts from a hooter which kills off any opposition. For Heel there's a carpet bag for him to cart other items around in. There's also a stuffed bunny which provides extra powers for the duo.

Each of the five planets have different backdrops: **Egyptus** – full of pyramids, mummies and other assorted eastern delights; **Penitentiary** – the Empires prison planet; **Safari** – jungle adventures; **Book World** – the Emperor's library; and finally **Blacktooth** itself – all displayed in a colourful 3D perspective.

We won't be around when this finally arrives on the streets but when it does don't hesitate grab it as soon as you can. From the amount I've been playing my preview copy it looks like this is going to knock the 3D games world for six.

RICHARD (totally zonked by this one, guys) **EDDY**


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